A SOCIOLOGY OF HORSE-RACING IN BRITAIN: A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE AND ORGANISATION OF BRITISH HORSE-RACING

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Synopsis

This thesis presents a sociological analysis of the organisation and significance of thoroughbred horse-racing in Britain. It focuses on both the internal world of racing and the relationship between racing and the wider society. It argues that such an approach is necessary for an appreciation of the full meaning of horse-racing as a social institution. The study finds two major points of articulation between racing and wider social processes: first in terms of the role of racing in elite sociability and structuration; and second in terms of its location in working class culture, particularly as it is mediated through the working class betting tradition. The precise linkages, continuities and changes within these areas are explored in order both to amplify and qualify the conventional observation of a coalescence of interests in racing between otherwise sharply differentiated social strata. The analysis points to the conclusion that while the symbolic legacy of this observation may be strong, the evidence for this symmetry and its pervasiveness is now more tenuous and its implications for the general process of class identification heavily circumscribed. The analysis of the discrete world of horse-racing concentrates first upon the social production of the racehorse as reflected through the position of the stable worker. Evidence is presented which both casts doubt on received images of this process and indicates some erosion of the distinctive cultural output of racing which has customarily attracted a benign curiosity in outsiders. Secondly, attention is focused on developments in the control and administration of racing. In particular, the emergent role of the state in this process is shown to have reverberated through both the production and regulatory sectors of the industry, provoking a profound dislocation in the exercise of power. Such intervention is also demonstrated to have reacted upon the production and consumption of betting, precisely the activity which provided the original rationale for intervention in racing. While there are important elements of continuity in the organisation of racing, the thesis expresses the view that racing has passed over a watershed in the last two decades which in time may prove to have eroded its distinctive contribution to British society.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Preliminary Remarks

A striking visual metaphor of the concern of this thesis is provided by the jacket of a widely read sociological text published in 1981. The title of Arthur Marwick's book, **Class, Image and Reality in Britain, France, and the U.S.A. since 1930,** is superimposed upon a colour photograph of two men standing on a rostrum. They are wearing morning suits and are clutching binoculars. Behind the rostrum it is possible to make out a white post which culminates in a red circle and which is clearly some sort of marker.

The book itself was clearly intended for a wide academic audience and for the 'intelligent layman'. It is also highly probable that a large proportion of this potential readership and a substantial percentage of the nation's adult population besides, would quickly recognise the image as a scene from Royal Ascot, the most prestigious race meeting in the British racing calendar and perhaps the best known race meeting in the entire world. Fewer might discern that these two men are, in fact, stewards of the meeting watching a horse-race in progress from their privileged vantage point beyond the winning post. Nevertheless, these few representational clues would be sufficient to evoke in most people a wider comprehension of a particular social event with its distinctive ambience and associations with high society, the monarchy, wealth and exclusiveness. Those who were responsible for the design of the book jacket must indeed have thought this to be the case, for there is no word of explanation in the book's preliminaries, nor indeed is there any reference to racing or Royal Ascot in the text.

This is significant because what it means is that there is a taken-for-granted assumption that this slice of the world of horse-racing has something to do with class or more precisely with the appearance and imagery of class. By the same token it also signifies that horse-racing is a readily recognisable part of British culture. In fact, whether chosen consciously or unconsciously, this representation is particularly apt for Marwick's thesis which is that class is an historical product, moulded by the particular historical and cultural experience of nations. There is an implicit assumption then that horse-racing has continued to contribute a distinctive ingredient to the total configuration of British society. This thesis, however, will present a more systematic and critical elaboration of the significance of racing in British culture. It will focus on both the relationship of horse-racing with its societal environment and on the internal world and organisation of racing in this country.

The genesis of a concern for racing as a sociological problem lay in some features of the author's own biography which also relate back to the question of class. In particular I was faced with what seemed a glaring personal contradiction. This was that as a person with impeccable working class credentials and upbringing, I found myself a close follower of racing despite its association with features which my liberal, educational and academic training led me to dislike intensely. Among these features were that racing is premised on great inequalities of wealth; it lends itself frequently to elitism and arrant class display; it has a long history of association with the symbolic relics of feudalism and traditionalism which are believed by many observers to be an entrenched characteristic of the activity; the super-exploitation of the work force was generally known to be the modus operandi of the racing industry. Personal experience had also

shown, however, that the ambience, 'colour' and spectacle of racing was often sufficient to enable a suspension of social criticism and to sustain engagement with the sport.

Whatever their intrinsic interest in racing itself, millions of largely working class bettors are also similarly attracted to racing and thereby are exposed to these aspects of racing and its routine taken-for-granted expressions of class structure and class relationships. The personal contradiction also represents a microcosm of a much wider contradiction, the association of the working class with a sport which in many ways represents the antithesis of the life experience of that class. The problem of the significance of racing for class relations will be returned to later. However, the key to explaining this involvement was also evident in the circumstances of my own biography. Like most other observers of racing brought up in a working class environment, initial engagement was quite straightforwardly through gambling. Such a path, evidently, had been trodden by numerous similar generations before. Indeed, considerable attention is given in the earlier part of the thesis to gambling and especially working class gambling.

However striking the somewhat paradoxical association of the working class with racing, the intrinsic activity of racing itself has clearly been the preserve of the upper class. Modern racing dating from the seventeenth century has never been solely the sport of kings but it has been monopolised by groups of the highest social status and greatest wealth in society. No study of racing then could hope to be adequate without paying considerable attention to this phenomenon. The precise role of racing in the culture of elite sociability, its possible significance for class formation in terms of its contribution to the cohesion, integration and identity of the upper class and the ways in which this may have changed are important questions to ask in

this respect. Fragmented observations on this theme are to be found in the many serious and less serious 'histories' of horse-racing and in the very few academic accounts of the sport but the research on which this thesis is based has uncovered no systematic investigation of these issues. In this study therefore what is known on these questions will be pulled together in a more coherent manner. Further fresh empirical material will be presented in order that a more informed judgment may be made about the sociological significance of racing in this context. Considerable space is given to the sociological significance of horse-racing in the study of elite culture and to reporting an empirical study engaging these questions. Designing an adequate procedure for this purpose is, however, a difficult task and the resulting partiality and selectiveness of the exercise means that there is still considerable scope for further investigation. Nevertheless, some of the ground may have been cleared.

It will be apparent that the broad problem of the role of horse-racing in British culture has been resolved into two more discreet, if substantial, issues. These are first, the role of racing in specifically elite or upper class culture; and secondly, the association of the working class with racing mediated through the practice of gambling. It could well be argued that each of these problems deserves a thesis in its own right and in retrospect this is a view with which the author has some sympathy. At the same time such a strategy would, almost by definition, rule out of consideration perhaps the most obvious sociological observation to be made about racing. This has been remarked upon by casual onlookers over a number of generations and indeed as noted above, prompted the initial concern with the subject. This is that racing attracts an interest from both ends of the social structure, albeit with different motives pre-eminent in each case. It is this coalescence of interest of people in widely different class situations which

gives the activity much of its social poignancy and relevance to the question of class relations.

Class and Culture

It should be stressed at this point, however, that the above assumptions concerning the potential mediatory role of horse-racing in the process of interclass identification, represent the raison d'etre or 'hard core' in Lakatos' terms, of the research rather than its subject (Lakatos, 1970). Yet as suggested above, it does seem likely that an institution such as horse-racing has some implications for the class structure and its specific configuration in British society. It will be useful at this point then to speculate on some of these.

At a descriptive level the 'class implications' of racing are fairly evident. In a thoughtful article, for example, Bugler (1968) argues that British racing reveals all the stratification of British society, from the everyday, clear-cut social progression of racecourse facilities to the "openness of Ascot's display of social difference, the shameless display of social ascendance" (1968, p.935). Neither, he suggests, is Ascot simply the risible rite of a dying race, for the leading actors in the racing business are powerful and rich with elite figures prominent among them. Further, the Ascot meeting in particular receives heavy support from industry and the city, which according to the author, thus help to maintain a bulwark of the social structure, namely class display.

The Royal Ascot meeting has a propensity to attract such commentaries, the periodic denunciations of left-wing public figures and the wry amazement of foreign observers. Royal Ascot is a truly eccentric English occasion but sociologically, it is more notable for the unremarkable way in which

hierarchy and social differences are presented and taken for granted. It is the normalcy of this display, not the obvious eccentricities, which are sociologically noteworthy. In perhaps more muted forms, such features are generally characteristic of the racing enterprise in its celebration of social differences.

Yet what is under discussion here are symbols and images of class and this is why the subject of Marwick's book is so aptly represented by the image discussed at the beginning of the Chapter. For while professional sociologists may find it exasperating, many people, certainly many working class people, conceptualise class precisely in terms of this kind of image; for many the image of a scene from Royal Ascot is what class, and the upper class in particular, is about.

It might be objected, however, that what is being discussed here are merely the cultural appearances of class and that this is a considerable distance removed from the issues of class determination or class relationships. Indeed, much class theorising over the past decade, heavily influenced as it has been by Marxist Structuralists, is rather dismissive of the subjective dimension or at least regards it as of secondary importance. In this light, mention of the term consciousness or of the subjective appreciation of class is liable to evoke some pungent comment. Olin Wright for example, quotes approvingly from Poulantzas in criticising:

> "the Hegelian scheme with its class in itself (economic class situation, uniquely objective determination of class by the process of production) and class for itself (class endowed with own 'class consciousness' and an autonomous political organisation = class struggle), which in the Marxist tradition is associated with Lukacs."
>
> (1978, p. 33)

Closely paraphrasing Poulantzas, Wright goes on to insist that classes do not exist and then enter class struggle, they are constituted by class struggle. Classes are independent of the will and consciousness of agents and class struggle itself does not depend on the conscious self-organisation of a class as a social force. The notion of class consciousness as commonly used, then, appears to be little more than an idealistic fixation. However, in view of the destination to which this type of argument usually proceeds, that is to the introduction of ideological criteria into the question of class determination, the above judgment seems a little premature.

The weaknesses of the recent neo-structuralist genre have been well exposed (for example by Parkin, 1979) but this innovative approach to the problem of class boundaries has been of some use especially in the analysis of the new middle class. It is also evident that the question of the determination (structural or otherwise) of class is analytically separate from that of the subjective apprehension of class. This is not to say, however, as is implied by this school of thought that the latter is of no account in political practice or class struggle.

The neo-structuralist position may be seen partly as a justified reaction to the disaggregation of class achieved by Western sociology as embodied in the distinction between 'class in itself' and 'class for itself'. This distinction, of course, was hardly intended to pave the way for empirical sociologists to trace ad nauseam and in abstracto, dimensions of the subjective awareness of class, a procedure which inevitably diluted the notion of class consciousness and ignored its dialectical nature (Mann, 1973). However, although the meaning of the 'ideological' is quite a specific one in the neo-structuralist argument, the attempt to introduce such a factor in the analysis of class determination represents a tacit admission of the power of ideology on the

working class and of the importance of such a factor for class relations and political practice. This was of course precisely the position of Lukacs, the object of the earlier criticism by Poulantzas. Interestingly also, two British writers broadly sympathetic to this approach find themselves forced to refer repeatedly to the problem of class consciousness in terms which would be familiar to more conventional sociology (Crompton and Gubbay, 1977).

Notwithstanding the neo-Marxist discussion then, it still seems eminently sensible to register that a significant aspect of the reality of class is how people experience and perceive it and that class subjectively experienced is a crucial ingredient in the dynamics of class relations. People live their lives at the surface, in ideology not in deep structures. To acknowledge this is not to confuse different levels of analysis.

Further, if there was one lesson to be gained from the exploration of 'class for itself' undertaken by British empirical sociology in the 1960's and 70's, it was that it was utterly mistaken to neglect the influence of national, cultural institutions in providing much of the raw material and the frameworks for its interpretation, of class awareness. The influence of local and personal milieu on consciousness, the primary focus of this research tradition, clearly needed to be seen in interaction with wider ideological outputs. However, horse-racing is precisely one (if one of the more peripheral) of such institutions.

It is in this context that one can re-introduce the observation of a shared interest in racing of large numbers of widely class differentiated people. Such an interest may promote identity even though it may be neither total nor unqualified. Class systems of course also generate systematic antagonisms and non-identity between class groupings but it is a

commonplace that a class hierarchy requires more than coercive control, legal expression and so on, for some sort of stability. This something or other coincides with the terrain occupied by 'ideology', 'false consciousness', 'cultural practices' or 'consensus', depending on one's theoretical persuasions.

It should be clear, however, that it is not being suggested here that the British class structure would fall apart were the institution of horse-racing to disappear overnight. This, in many ways rather esoteric activity, is just one of a number of social and cultural practices which together provide a resource for a unique pattern of symbolism and signification which constitutes the ideological mortar for that distinctive edifice, the British class structure. Such practices and the attendant symbolism are often closely interwoven. Horse-racing itself is quite closely inter-connected with a wide range of powerful symbolism in the British context. Most obviously it is strongly associated with the monarchy. Few observers of the summer of 1981 in Britain could fail to detect the continuing power of monarchic symbolism and allegiance evoked by the 'Royal Wedding' for example. By the same token nationalism also enters the symbolic framework which also includes racing. Racing is often portrayed and valued for its essential 'Englishness'. Relatedly, it somehow also embodies the values of the 'country' (vis-a-vis the 'city') where true 'Englishness' is reputedly seen to lie (Newby, 1977; Williams, 1973), however illusory the belief.[2] Racing may also be taken as an aspect of the celebration of animals in British culture, again, however contradictory this may be in practice. It would be possible to go on tracing out the inter-connections in this way but the essential point is that the significance of racing and the interest which it draws lies in its position within a total cultural pattern which makes the social and class structure of this country unique. Giddens makes a similar point in respect of the question of the process of class formation:

> "the combination of the sources of mediate and proximate structuration distinguished here, creating a threefold class structure, is generic to capitalist society. But the mode in which these elements are merged to form a specific class system, in any given society, differs significantly according to variations in economic and political development."
>
> (Giddens, 1973, p. 110)

If national and historical factors can be shown to have a decisive influence on the shape of an emerging class system as Giddens assumes, then cultural factors must be equally essential to the specific form of a class system and it is the outward appearance rather than the underlying structure which people will apprehend as the reality of class. Racing then is one of a large number of cultural practices potentially capable of generating positive identity across classes and status groups. This is not to say, however, that this process is able to swamp the systematically generated differentiation and antagonism characteristic of a capitalist society or that the mollifying effects of culture are constant.

In this thesis the problem of the role of racing in British culture is therefore confronted in two ways. First, through an investigation of the significance of racing in patterns of elite sociability and secondly, through an examination of what might be termed 'the gambling connection' which provides the aperture through which to view the association of the working class with racing. It will be evident, however, that some considerable licence has been taken with the term, culture, so far. Needless to say it is a term which offers considerable elasticity of use and its history indicates that this ambiguity has been ruthlessly exploited.[2] Nevertheless, it behoves any user to make clear the sense in which such a problematic term will appear in the discussion.

In the following arguments the term will broadly refer to the extended common-sociological sense usage outlined by Williams (1961) in his typology of meanings of culture. Williams offers a threefold classification of such meanings; culture in the sense of an ideal culture, the ideal of human perfection or as 'the informing spirit' of a whole way of life (Williams, 1981); culture in the sense of documentary culture, the products of imaginative and intellectual work; and finally, culture as a description of a whole way of life of a people or group of people. It is this latter 'extended sociological use' as Williams (1981) later calls it, which seems most useful in the present context. Its important elements are tradition, customs, rituals, symbols and common sense beliefs. Culture must also be understood as providing the raw material through which life is lived and experienced and not as secondary to some elements of reality constituted prior to it.

The Internal Domain

The task of situating racing in British culture, however, cannot be undertaken simply by focusing on external relationships or on what organisation theorists would call the environment - output relationship of racing. Considerable attention needs to be given to the internal organisation or logic of the activity. As Khan (1980) argues, the racing game itself may be considered a sub-culture of the wider culture with its own common, distinctive features. It can be established that the racing world is one which exhibits distinctive forms of knowledge, ideology, language and symbolism, rituals and importantly, distinctive patterns of social interaction. It may also be argued that some of these characteristics are not entirely congruent with wider patterns of social organisation, hence the cultural output of racing is but one of many currents contributing to the complexity and contradictory nature of the overall culture. An appreciation of the content of the racing sub-culture and the meanings generated within and by it, is thus essential to an

appreciation of its total cultural significance. A large portion of this thesis is thus given over to a study of the internal domain of racing. As the later discussion of sociological work on horse-racing will indicate, there are a number of possible ways of going about this task. While horse-racing may appear a very narrow sub-culture, it in fact presents a social world of amazing complexity, an endless list of participant groups, many different spheres of purposive activity and one with a considerable history of commercial organisation. As in any sociological study there is a pressing necessity for selection.

A pivotal dimension of any activity is its characteristic forms of interaction and hence it is upon these that attention is focused in the study of the internal dynamics of racing. It is possible to look at these at a number of levels and from different viewpoints, however, in this discussion the focus in the main will be on employment relationships in the racehorse training industry and these in turn will be primarily viewed through the occupational role of the stable worker, in other words from the bottom up.

There are a number of reasons for this, some theoretical, some practical and some frankly political. Given that some form of selection is inevitable it was decided to concentrate on one specific area in order to achieve a degree of thoroughness which a survey of several different social locations would make more difficult. The employment relationship in the training industry was chosen, first because of its critical position in the social production of the racehorse. Secondly, because what are commonly assumed to be the characteristic form of relationships in racing, namely traditionalist relations, would appear in the most crystallised form in this area. While it does not constitute a critical case in the strict sense, work relations may, nevertheless, be regarded as a key site for observing possible changes in the

assumed patterns of relationships which may be indicative of changes on a broader front. The choice of the occupational role of the stable worker as the medium for this focus is open to the charge familiar to industrial sociologists in particular (and for the most part justified) that those at the lower end of the social hierarchy are rather more convenient to study than those in authority. The general applicability of this criticism is, in the writer's view, incontestable. In racing, however, the position is slightly different in that those at the superordinate end of employment and authority relationships generally suffer from over-exposure at least in the trade press; whereas the basic grade workers, the stable workers, were to all intents and purposes 'invisible'. From a value position certainly, it was decided to even up this imbalance.

However, in many ways the situation of the stable worker also provides an analogue of the wider theme of the involvement of the working class in racing. The occupation of stable lad provides a job just like any other job but it involves work specifically geared to the demands of wealthy and often prestigious people, frequently in the context of face-to-face interaction with such people. The attraction and loyalties generated among the workforce by racing in the face of frequently open exploitation, evident inequalities and status display have thus a double significance. This occupational role is thus a potentially fruitful site for elucidating the ambience and meanings generated by racing which are capable of attracting the most unlikely of followers. Considerable attention then is given to the nature of stable work, the identities and affiliations it generates among the workers, to the employment relationship and to changes in all of these in recent years. Such changes may be shown to be related in part to developments at the level of political economy and 'haute politique' in racing.

A strategic area in the internal world of racing is that of control and administration. It is also one which lies at an important interface between the world of racing and the wider society which is bridged at this point by the relationship of racing with the State. Government involvement with racing is by no means a new phenomenon but in recent years the effects of state intervention have reverberated through the industry from the level of strategic control of the activity to the employment relationship in racehorse training. An analysis of the development of control in racing and its relationship with the emerging interest of the State is both essential to an understanding of the internal world of racing and its relationship with its external environment. Some space is therefore devoted to a discussion of the role of the Jockey Club which, historically, has held the reins of power in racing; to the Horserace Totalisator Board and the Horserace Betting Levy Board, both of which are State sponsored organisations with important functions within the racing world and arguably within the State itself. This analysis will be seen to have implications for the symbolic role of racing in British culture.

This thesis is mainly concerned with the social and cultural aspects of racing but it should also be registered that racing is an activity of considerable economic proportions. These will come to light as the discussion proceeds, particularly in the analysis of the role of the state mentioned above, and in the sketch of the industry in Chapter Four. Some would argue that racing is merely a form of consumption masquerading as production but in any event, in Britain, vast revenues are processed through the racing and horserace betting complex: taxed stakes on horserace betting, for example, amounted to £3,200 million in 1982.

Nevertheless, racing often appears as an esoteric activity of great

opacity. Hence at this point, having outlined the general parameters of the thesis, it will be helpful to indicate the contours of existing sociological interest in racing.

Sociologists and Horse-racing

Despite the fact that horse-racing exhibits many of the features typically guaranteed to attract the enquiring, iconoclastic attention of the sociologist, there are very few studies which investigate the activity seriously or systematically. Casual, albeit insightful sketches are to be found scattered here and there in the literature; Bugler's article (1968) discussed above is one such offering. In this Section the more sustained contributions of other writers are considered. This will also serve to situate the concerns of this thesis in comparison.[3]

The most notable contributions to knowledge in this area, however, have appeared on the other side of the Atlantic: curiously perhaps as there, horse-racing had earlier adopted rather more thoroughgoing, commercialised forms and has been less obviously differentiated from mainstream commercial sporting activities than is its apparently more antiquated counterpart in this country. Perhaps the most alluring but physically almost inaccessible source is Edward Devereux' (1949) unpublished Ph.D. thesis, which is a study of horse-racing and lotteries in America. Snippets of this remarkable study appear in the works of later writers but these make it clear that the activity of horse-racing is of only secondary interest to the author. As will be shown in Chapter Three, Devereux' main interest is the study of the functional dynamics of gambling in American (U.S.A.) society which he pursues with ingenuity and rigour. Horse-racing is of interest in this context insofar as historically, it has provided for Americans a culturally acceptable medium for the more dubiously regarded activity of gambling. There is litte

doubt that:

> "horse-racing has always been associated with gambling."
>
> (Devereux, 1949, p.258, quoted in Scott, 1968, p.117).

or that gambling motivations are very close to the inner logic of horse-racing but the moments of gambling are rather better disguised behind a facade of intrinsic sporting interest, fashion and respectability than in other comparable activities. Although through a lack of direct access, it was not possible to form an independent judgment, it is apparent that Devereux' account of the social organisation of racing is heavily circumscribed by this overall concern with gambling and in some respects its empirical adequacy suffers as a result, (cf. Scott, 1968, p.137).[4] Devereux' concern with racing then is very heavily subordinated to the overwhelming problematic of gambling. While considerable attention is given here to gambling, the emphasis is, roughly, reversed.

Herman's (1967) study of the race-track is similarly overlaid with the gambling theme. Herman is primarily concerned with the rationalities of 'horse players' in betting decision making. Other observations, interesting in themselves, go no further than noting the stratification of enclosures at the race-track, and the scale of commercialisation of the American racing business; the internal social world of racing is left virtually untouched.

Ready compensation, however, is to be found in Marvin Scott's (1968) discussion of the American racing game which emcompasses an interest in the total world of racing and includes both the producers and consumers of the activity, and the intrinsic and gambling elements of racing. Thus the subject of Scott's study is horse-racing as a type of social organisation

(p.viii). Central to the author's thesis and theoretical position, however, is that the social organisation of racing is predicated upon the search for and control of strategic information; the racing game is an information game.

The social world of racing then is constructed out of the diverse and varying strategies of typical, respective groups of actors seeking information about others and controlling information about themselves in the knowledge that other groups of actors are engaged in precisely the same kind of activity. While information is normally incomplete and ambiguous, actors typically pursue strategies which assume that information is both available and reliable. Absences and gaps are filled in and rationalised. Actors act as if purposes are attainable given the means and thus they may be said to be acting rationally or at least displaying subjective rationality.

Among the information game 'moves' discussed by Scott are recording moves - the identification of relevant information required about a player or group of players, including secret moves, characteristic ways of working and so on. Secondly, there are 'control' moves which involve impression management by manipulation of information, either through covering up or selective revealment of information. 'Uncovering' moves are founded on the assumption that information is indeed being manipulated in some way and are thus oriented to unveiling the hidden purpose. Finally Scott identifies 'recovering' moves which are premised on the perception of the information holder that the seeker is aware of control moves; 'double' information may thus be offered which confirms the seeker's suspicions but is actually oriented to a quite different purpose to that envisaged by the seeker.

The involvement of different groups of players in the information game depends on their respective goals and recurrent problems. Some participants

are rather more concerned with some moves than others and will tend to develop 'standard orientations' to these problems. Hence while such orientations are subjective they are by no means random. All this is not to imply, Scott argues, that the actors themselves consider they are part of a game; the game analogy merely implies that respective actors in orienting their actions take into account mutual expectations of each other. Indeed for the participants, racing is a deadly serious game the world over.

To the extent that Scott's analysis manifestly attempts to uncover the means by which the respective actors make sense of their environments, it may be considered a nascent ethnomethodological study and it is clear that Scott is advocating a theoretical programme along these lines. Such an approach is potentially attractive for the close description of the esoteric practices and private languages of sub-cultures. This potential the author exploits with some thoroughness in plotting the interactions within and between the three main groups of participants in the racing game: the performers, audience and stage managers.

Perhaps the most graphic illustration of Scott's argument concerns the discussion of one of the major performers, namely, the horse. The 'horse' it transpires is a social construct par excellence. This is the case not only in the sense that the notion of the 'thoroughbred' is itself a cultural product (and one of quite mystificatory proportions, see Chapter Five), but also because a 'real' thoroughbred is one that exhibits the human characteristics of courage and 'heart', in other words, a horse that runs hard consistently. However, whether such characteristics accrue to an animal is less a function of its intrinsic physical characteristics and genetic make-up, than of the strategies of the trainer. The 'lone-wolf' manipulator type of trainer for example, who retains his independence and depends on successful betting with

his own money will pursue 'concealment' strategies to disguise, as far as possible, the true form of the horse. In brief, this will mean that the horse will more often than not be entered in races to which it is entirely unsuited - by class, distance, going (state of the track), riding tactics and so on. The horse will become fit through these races but will produce erratic-looking form. The animal will be dubbed a 'plug', 'goat', or by some other derogatory term. Its winning race for which it has covertly been prepared (or 'laid out' in British racing parlance) will be passed off as a 'flash in the pan' - further confirmation of its unreliability. However, were the animal to be claimed by a 'horse-trader', an 'honest-john' type of trainer who is himself oriented to detecting the deception of other trainers in order to buy good class horses cheaply (the practice of a good halterman) and has different ends in mind, it may be allowed to run to its true form consistently and thus earn the accolade of a 'real' thoroughbred.[5] It may not be a 'world-beater' but 'never runs a bad race' and thus demonstrates 'heart'. The definition of this animal as a real horse then is the outcome of the competing strategies of other principal players in the game.

Types of performer, jockeys, trainers, owners and so on are thus constructed on the basis of typical and distinctive patterns of means-ends relationships, that is, strategies. 'Manipulators' and 'honest johns' may in some circumstances appear to be following similar concealment tactics but their meaning is altogether altered when one takes into account that the 'manipulators' are intent on the betting coup whereas the various categories of 'honest johns' are likely to be oriented to preventing their horses being claimed or to beating the handicapper. The 'holy family' of officials tend to regard the former far more dubiously than the latter.

One unpalatable fact, however, is potentially disruptive of the 'reality'

constructed by the racing performers and that is that failure is an endemic feature of racing. However, the racing world has developed its own characteristic responses to this problem which are institutionalised in the concept and practice of the 'excuse', a phenomenon which evidently transcends national boundaries. The 'excuse' is germane to the whole enterprise, the cementing bond of racing rationality. Reasonable accounts of unexpected (usually but not exclusively poor) performance are demanded by the trainer of the jockey, the owner of the trainer, periodically by the stewards of the jockey and the trainer, and of all of these, secondarily, by the racing crowd. These are not always the same account. The jockey may excuse himself by intimating that the animal was not fit enough but also suggesting that bad luck was encountered in running. If the trainer is to save face with the owner, the latter part of the excuse will be passed on. The jockey has passed on some useful but potentially dangerous information to the trainer but has also provided a face-saver and thus will have not completely blotted his copybook. Thus the event may be explained without any of the performers necessarily losing esteem. Of course, all this is predicated on the silence of the horse!

Scott thus argues that:

> "Excuses are a fundamental device used to restore stability in ruptured social relations."
>
> (Scott, 1968, p.71)

In this way the rationality of original strategies is preserved as, by the same token, is the view that the racing game as a whole is a rational process capable of control and predictability.

The ubiquity of the excuse in racing on both sides of the Atlantic is

amply confirmed by my own observations, from participation in racing, of encounters not normally penetrable by the public, namely pre- and post-race conversations between trainer and jockey. Interviews with the stable lads, reported more fully in Chapters Six and Seven, some of whom were also getting rides under National Hunt Rules, also confirmed this picture; one subject even recorded the view that jockeys were often formulating their excuses on the way to the start!

As with other aspects of the racing game, Scott's observations on the role of the excuse are finely drawn. The discussion clearly gives an overall impression of the ambience of racing in the United States with its explicit, heavy commercial currents, the apparently less widespread and less militant status consciousness of the participants in racing, its 'hustling' sharpness which has been apocryphally associated with city sub-cultures, and its elements of circus and showbusiness. There is also some credibility in Scott's methodological claims concerning the usefulness of an 'information game' approach in unearthing the subjective understandings of a world such as racing.

Yet this world which Scott describes is too orderly, symmetrical and conflict-free. The notion of the horse as a social construct is a brilliant metaphor for the intersubjective processes which Scott analyses but at the same time it is too tidy. In reality, many loose ends are left in social relationships, strategies more often than not fail, not every reversal may be absorbed by the 'excuse', relations do remain ruptured and so on. Virtually the only reference to social conflict appears in the short discussion of owner-trainer relations and the potential therein for conflicting expectations to be resolved in line with varying relations of dependence. However, there is no account of how forms of patronage may have evolved historically.

Employment relations for the waged labour force are unproblematicised - the 'backstretch' (that is the stables area at the track) is an isolated but largely harmonious community.[6] Cumulatively the racing game appears as a-politicised with little indication of processes of interaction between interest groups and the controlling authorities. Despite the wider emphasis on interactional processes, the absence of an historical dimension renders the account a static - albeit very perceptive - snapshot of the racing game.

Some of these difficulties are avoided by Khan's (1980) study of the 'Sport of Kings' in Britain which is located in a rather different methodological tradition. As there is some overlap in the concerns of the present thesis and those of Khan's study, it will be instructive to consider the latter more fully at this point.

Khan's thesis revolves around the highly plausible contention that British horse-racing may be viewed as a traditional social structure undergoing quite profound social changes. The author approaches the problem mainly from an anthropological perspective which focuses on the problem of culture. Changes in the social structure of racing are seen as a function of the changing relation between culture and sub-culture. The cultural isolation of racing has been eroded as relations with the wider society have proliferated as new groups and interests have been introduced into racing. Some effort is thus given over to the question of the extent to which racing may be regarded as a sub-culture in terms of the classical anthropological meanings of the concept.

The author argues that British horse-racing clearly qualifies as a sub-culture as it can be shown to share a singular pattern of structural and cultural elements which are quite sharply differentiated from those pertaining

in the wider society. Further, many of these elements are such as to clearly mark the sub-culture as 'traditional'. Two examples would be the respect for unchanging training methods and the pyramidal structure and anachronistic social composition of the racing hierachy. It is argued that racing remained in a state of cultural isolation and structural stagnation for two centuries until the 1960's, since when important structural changes have overtaken the activity. For example, the Jockey Club has been forced to adopt a more active and receptive stance towards the industry as the pace of politicisation of interest groups has increased, with demands for greater representation. A shift in the traditional pattern of control of racing has been prompted by the emergent power of the government sponsored Levy Board. The social and financial boundaries of the activity have also widened considerably in the last two decades. A number of factors are seen to be at the root of these changes. Among the more important of these are the Betting Levy legislation of 1961 which gave birth to the statutory Horserace Betting Levy Board; the advent of Betting Duty and hypothecation of betting revenues which implicated the mass betting public in the affairs of racing; the appearance of syndicated ownership and finally the entry of a powerful trade union into the racing scene celebrated in the 1975 stable lads' strike. Such factors have effectively propelled new groups into the social and economic organisation of racing.

It is not clear whether such elements represent a hierachy of factors or whether they are to be considered of equal weight. In the body of the argument, however, considerable attention is given to changes in the pattern of racehorse ownership which in turn have generated new demands, for example, on both the training profession and the racing hierarchy. In filling out the major themes of the study, the author reports on the results of a postal questionnaire of an 'accidental' sample of four hundred or so racehorse

owners which allows a full discussion of ownership motivations, attitudes to change, demographic prophiles and the established owner stereotypes, that is the 'traditional' vis-a-vis 'nouveaux riches' owner. Khan's work also contains a good deal of ethnographic data on the racing stables and on different categories of participants associated with them.

It will become clear that the present thesis will find much to support in Khan's work. There are, however, some critical, substantive differences as well as those of emphasis and procedure which may usefully be made explicit at this stage. In the writer's view, Khan correctly identifies major processes of change in the industry and some factors which are relevant to an account of those changes. However, it has already been suggested that not enough consideration has been given in the argument to the weighting of such factors. In particular, insufficient weight is given to the role of the State in racing through the agency of the Levy Board for the changes which are described. Indeed, without offering a simple mono-causal explanation, it can be argued that this factor is germane not only to many of the changes that are identified by Khan but also to the significance of the processes adduced to account for them. For example, although the expansion of middle-class interest in ownership can to some extent be laid at the door of movements in income and wealth distribution, the possibilities of increased participation and the take-up of syndication have been made much more attractive by the allocative policies of the Levy Board. It will be shown further, for example, that although there was a trade union presence in the industry for some time before the 1975 strike and that the increased militancy of the Newmarket workforce was to an extent an autonomous development, collective representation had very little purchase in the industry before the Levy Board began to assume a more directive role.

Khan's observations concerning the relationship between Betting Tax, hypothecation and the mass betting public is also rather curious.[7] This will become clear in Chapter Nine where in contrast to Khan's work much more explicit attention is given to the role of the State at both a theoretical and empirical level. As Khan implies, however, the involvement of the State is indeed premised on the existence of a mass betting public and as was mentioned earlier, considerable attention is given to the problematic of gambling and working class gambling in particular, in this thesis. This also constitutes a major point of difference with Khan's study. In respect of the question of racehorse ownership the present study is complementary to that of Khan in that it focuses on the role of participation in racing in elite culture and particularly among the economic elite, an issue on which some fresh empirical data is presented.

Also complementary is the focus on the social production of the racehorse. However, the present study examines the nature of employment relations in racing and the attendant occupational culture of strategic racing personnel more systematically and with the use of concepts derived from the sociology of work and the labour process more generally. This enables a closer investigation of what Khan correctly considers a key structural variable under change in racing culture, namely the traditionalism of the employment relationship, as well as of other aspects of that culture. The methodological and procedural differences between the two studies is perhaps most evident in this context where an analytical use of observational and sample survey data here may be contrasted with a more descriptive enthnographically-orientated approach.

Hence although there is some overlap in the substantive concerns of the two studies, there remain important differences of emphasis, methodology and

procedure. Since this thesis is based on the belief that sociological knowledge is both possible and cumulative, some attempt will be made to bring together the findings of the studies in the concluding discussion.

Methodology

It will be clear that the assumption underlying this thesis is that the study of the relationship between racing and society must proceed with an analysis of both the internal and external logic of the activity, that it should attempt to comprehend the relationship as far as is practicably possible, as a totality. It is assumed, in other words, that the meaning of both the parts and the whole cultural configuration of the racing world, which includes its purchase on the wider society, can only be understood in their inter-relationship. For example, employment relationships in the racing industry cannot be viewed entirely in abstract from the wider symbolic, cultural overtones of racing which help to define racing work as somehow 'special'. Equally one of the dimensions which contributes to the distinctive cultural output of racing is the traditionalism which has characterised both client-producer and employment relations in the training industry.

This consideration constitutes a methodological assumption at the level of the structure of the research strategy (Bulmer, 1977).[8] Some further comments of a methodological nature can also be made at this point. First, however, it should be stressed that the interest of this thesis is primarily one of substantive theory rather than of theoretical style. This is not to adopt some naively empiricist position which assumes that empirical study is possible without explicit or implicit theoretical presuppositions. What it indicates rather is that on balance the account attempts to say something about the social significance of a concrete social practice rather than to single-mindedly resolve certain theoretical problems. On this basis it is of

course possible to make statements of a theoretical nature and to comment on the inadequacies or otherwise of relevant theoretical programmes. This is a somewhat different approach to that adopted by Scott, for example, who uses the empirical stuff of racing organisation in the United States to demonstrate the powers of a particular theoretical tradition.

Khan (1980) argues that the lack of previous work in the area and the geographical organisation of racing in Britain make an eclectic methodology and an ethnographic approach almost inevitable. The esoteric nature of the racing world continues to make ethnographic contributions worthwhile and there are some elements of ethnography in this study. The present approach may also be described as eclectic insofar as it is willing to borrow useful concepts from different theoretical domains. However, it has been argued that a specific strategic methodological assumption underlies the study and in this sense the methodology is far from being eclectic.

The bifocal emphasis of the thesis which has been identified above, is, correspondingly, met by two broad methodological approaches. The study of core processes in the training industry at the heart of the internal world of racing is undertaken with the use of conventional survey and interview procedures together with personal observation. More explicit comment on the exact procedures used in this approach are made in Chapter Four. The analysis of the wider cultural implications of racing, what has been termed the external logic of the activity, and of the important intervening area of the role of the state in betting and racing affairs, is conducted using what can be termed, a socio-historical approach. While this has involved the processing of documentary and statistical data, it is also dependent on the secondary analysis of the work of both sociologists and historians. This is a naturally hazardous task, prone to the replication of assumptions and

selection of conveniently supportive arguments. There seem to be no facile means of avoiding this problem beyond the normal, heavy responsibility of the social scientist to adopt a self-consciously critical attitude. However, the wary sociologist has been accorded some help in the often treacherous territory of social history by the more explicit theoretical concern evident in that discipline in recent years. Further comments are made on this in Chapters Two and Three. Hence, although a number of different research techniques are indeed called upon, they are organised by broader methodological premises central to the conception of the project.

One final methodological point may be mentioned at this juncture. This study, insofar as it concentrates on horse-racing in Britain, is of its nature a single case study, perhaps the simplest research design in the armoury of social research (Bulmer, 1977). The limitations of this procedure are well known and became increasingly apparent during the course of the study, especially where questions of the external logic of racing were raised. Ideally, analysis at this level would have been comparative and cross-cultural in order to throw into relief the possible varying significance of racing in different cultures. However, given the resources available, the breadth of such a study would undoubtedly have detracted from the degree of attention which could have been devoted to this particular case. Hence, while the limitations of the present procedure need to be recognised, it is intended that the material and analysis in this study would render such a cross-cultural study in the future more feasible. Comparison with the organisation of racing and gambling in the United States and France would possibly prove very instructive. However, where comparisons are made in this study it will be evident that they are of an essentially ad hoc nature.

The universe of horse-racing provides a rich empirical harvest for

sociological enquiry, making its relative neglect by the discipline all the more incomprehensible. However, it remains to situate briefly the present thesis in terms of the studies of horse-racing mentioned above and to provide a summary of the contents of the study.

The present study is both wider in orientation than the important works of Scott and Khan and in some respects more specific. As has been shown, Scott is concerned to explore the phenomenal world of horse-racing as it is constructed by and through the orientations and strategies of the major participants. The wider cultural reverberations of racing are, quite properly from his point of view, neglected. Despite the reference to the interaction between culture and sub-culture as an explanation of change in the activity, Khan too is primarily concerned with the sub-culture of racing, illustrating the broad sweep of the cultural and structural aspects of that sub-culture. The present study complements these approaches by focusing on two specific ways in which racing may be viewed as interconnecting with the wider culture, namely through its role in elite culture and through the practice of gambling in working class culture. However, this study also focuses specifically on the internal context of racing as a work process in order to lay bare, perhaps in more detail than has been done so far, the nature of work and work relationships in the racehorse training industry which in their received appearances are metaphors for racing culture as a whole. The role of government is also seen to be important in bridging the internal domain and external environment of racing and in this study the issue is given much more explicit and theoretical attention, as an attempt is made to account for the altered balance of power in the racing business in Britain.

Chapter Two then comprises an historical and empirical investigation of racing and elite sociability. Chapter Three investigates the issue of gambling

and its articulation with working class culture. Chapters Four, Five, Six, Seven and Eight constitute a discussion of the social production of the racehorse. Chapter Four offers a sketch of the racing industry and introduces the research procedures. Chapter Five examines the labour process in the training industry, Chapter Six the nature of work and work relations among waged labour in the industry in Newmarket, the headquarters of British racing. Chapters Seven and Eight analyse respectively the occupational community of the stable lads and the development of employment relations in the industry. Chapter Nine examines the nature of control and administration and the role of the State in this process. The final Chapter brings together the diverse threads of the research, reaches some analytical conclusions and draws some implications for substantive policy.

Notes

1. Ironically, as will be clear from Chapter Two, the real commercialisation of racing in the form of the development of the 'enclosed' racecourse in the Nineteenth Century, was closely associated with the expansion of urban working class demand.

2. Cataloguing the different uses of the term culture indeed became something of a minor industry among anthropologists. Possibly the most authoritative attempt is that of Kroeber and Kluckholn (1952).

3. This procedure will also be useful in view of the contribution made by Khan (1980) to this literature. The research for the present thesis was already advanced when the author discovered the existence of 'rival' research which superficially at least, appeared to be covering very similar ground.

4. Devereux' thesis is housed at the library of the University of Harvard which does not circulate theses. An extensive summary in noteform of this thesis was, however, kindly supplied to the author by Dr. David Downes. He, of course, can take no responsibility for comments made in the text on Devereux' thesis.

5. A 'claiming' race is one which any of the entered runners are liable to be claimed by any other owner or person (depending on the rules of the relevant racing authority) for a price set by the race managers.

6. The backstretch is so called because it is situated on American tracks along the back strait of the racetrack. North American courses stage racing seasons which can last for ninety days at a time. For this period of time racing workers are virtually based at the track.

7. To anticipate the later discussion somewhat, it appears that the author suggests that the advent of Betting Tax in 1965 showed the potential of hypothecation in respect of betting revenues which unleashed a fuller exploitation of gambling expenditure (i.e. on horseraces) dramatically changing the financial parameters of the Levy Board's activities and those of racing as a whole. However, the levy on bookmakers instigated by the 1961 Betting Levy Act was already in effect an hypothecated tax and thus the principle of hypothecation was not established by the later Betting Duty arrangements.

8. Bulmer suggests that the term 'methodology' is used in three senses and these are to be distinguished. General methodology concerns the general principles guiding sociological investigation and thus also involves epistomological issues. This is to be distinguished from methodology in the sense of research strategy, assumptions regarding sociological research embodied in a particular approach, and this in turn from the sense of methodology as research technique.

CHAPTER TWO

RACING AND ELITE CULTURE

This chapter will assess the significance of horse-racing in upper class and elite culture in Britain. In pursuing this theme, it will be necessary first to establish the analytical significance of forms of sociability for processes of elite structuration and to pay attention to the problematic nature of notions such as 'elites', 'elite formation" and the 'upper class'. The discussion will therefore proceed with a brief review of relevant work in the sociology of elites, noting both conceptual and methodological difficulties and points of substantive agreement. This discussion will serve to establish the theoretical relevance of an investigation of the area of elite sociability. On this basis, an historical overview of forms of elite sociability in modern British society will locate the importance of horse-racing at that level of the social structure. The developing significance of racing in this social context will then be traced through an empirical study which contrasts participation rates in racing and in other forms of elite sociability for one section of the British upper class, the corporate economic elite. The data which compares two widely separate years, 1904 and 1976, also contains information relevant to other processes of structuration. On the basis of this evidence some judgements will be made on the continuing cultural significance of racing in relation to the upper class more generally.

The chapter then falls into three major sections: first, a theoretical discussion of the role of sociability in elite structuration; secondly, an historical study of forms of elite sociability and the role of racing among these; and, finally, an examination of the pattern of racing ownership and

the participation of an economic elite in racing.

The Sociology of Elites: problems of theory and methodology

Conceptual confusion in the study of elites has been noted by many writers. This is manifested in a variety of ways but partly originates in the clash between elite theory and class theory (Giddens and Stanworth, 1978). The somewhat diverse standpoints of the classical elite theorists, Mosca and Pareto, were at least at one in their assumption of the essentially political determination of elite power. This position was, of course, explicitly antithetical to that of orthodox Marxism and the assertion of the final unit of political and economic power (Meisal, 1965; Parry, 1969). Nevertheless, diluted notions of 'elite' have been incorporated into Marxist or quasi-Marxist positions as in C. W. Mills' celebrated discussion of the 'power elite' for example. Mills' (1956) discussion hung somewhat precariously between the two traditions if it finally retained the thrust of the author's Marxist predispositions. Other writers, notably Miliband (1969), often retained the conceptual language of 'elites' but ditched the theoretical baggage, unproblematically subsuming the term within a Marxist analysis. Still others have adopted the more limited meanings of elite but have altered the vocabulary in favour of concepts such as the 'inner group' for example (Domhoff, 1975; Useem, 1978). It has also been argued that the neo-structuralist preoccupation with 'class fractions' within the ruling class is in effect not far removed from a notion of elites (Giddens and Stanworth, 1978). The pluralist tradition of political science, of course, has also added to this assemblage with its own distinctive notion of elite competition.

The great weight of research and writing on elites in recent years seems far removed from the assumptions of classical elite theory and hence the use of the term elite in no way implies an adherence to these assumptions.

Clearly, as Giddens (1974) argues, there is no necessary incompatibility between the notion of 'elite' itself and a class-theoretical approach to power.

Additional difficulties stem from the frequent observation of students of 'power' concerning the lack of a necessary analytical correspondence between the holding of elite positions in economic, political or cultural spheres and the 'mediation of control' (Giddens and Stanworth, 1978), that is the exercise of 'real power' (Pahl and Winkler 1974, Berkeley-Thomas 1978 inter alia).[1] This is an issue which has recurred, particularly in discussions of the intercorporate economic elite, for example. Members of this elite may well, as Pahl and Winkler (1974) argue, lack real power in their organisations because of their spread of commitments. However, such figures are likely to be influential in the network of corporate relations and in its relation to wider policy making or policy influencing bodies. It is the standing of such personnel in these networks which makes them attractive to employing organisations. Decision making power within organisations is more or less irrelevant to this wider structure of power. Pennings (1980), however, shows that members of the intercorporate elite are indeed usually firmly based in one of their organisations.

Nevertheless, the question of positional versus real power remains a severe problem and the gap between the 'institutional mediation of power' and the 'mediation of control' needs to be filled-in empircally for given cases. In practice most writers adopt the position of Giddens and Stanworth who use the term 'elite' to refer "to those occupying high positions of authority within an organisation, without in any way prejudging the issue of how far that authority reflects the actual power they may wield" (1978, p.207). Fidler (1981) for example, follows much the same procedure in his empirical study of the British business elite. However, clearly, a similar

decision needs to be made about the relevance of different organisations to the mediation of control - there are organisations and Organisations'.[2]

In any event, though the problem of nominal and real power remains a fairly intractable one, it may be more useful to consider certain kinds of position holders as 'candidates' or part of the 'pool of candidates' for respective elites. This leaves aside for further investigation the question of the mediation of control in practice. However, important questions do still remain about how the 'pool' is formed and reproduced. This is the position adopted in this discussion, especially in relation to the empirical study discussed later in the chapter.

Aside from these problems in the arena of 'power research' much ambiguity exists in relation to the precise significance and interrelation of a whole number of processes which have been extensively researched and discussed in the literature. Such processes include the role of wealth and property and its intergenerational transmission, educational experiences of elite candidates, recruitment patterns more generally, common extra-corporate memberships, patterns of kinship, friendship and acquaintanceship, other forms of sociability, the role of interlocking directorships and so on. In addition, discussion is often overlaid by a concern with the relevance of 'Managerialist' theories.

Some of the most useful conceptual work towards a resolution of the relative significance of these processes is provided by Giddens (1974, 1978). The important distinction between processes of class structuration and the institutional mediation of power on the one hand and the mediation of control on the other has already been mentioned. Accounts of how the upper class reproduces itself clearly do not suffice as explanations of how

control is mediated in practice though equally it is apparent that the reproduction of elites is crucial to the reproduction of the upper class as a whole and that elites are central to the exercise of power. These then are distinct if closely related issues, but they are usually conflated in the literature. As Giddens points out for example, the thesis of a 'ruling class' obviously requires more than the demonstration of the existence of an economically privileged, exclusive, self-perpetuating and highly interconnected upper class.

A further important distinction in this context is that between mediate and proximate structuration. Mediate structuration refers to the reproduction of classes across generations and requires analysis of the factors making for openess or closure in intergenerational mobility. Hence, relevant here are the concerns with the transmission of wealth, educational patterns, the transition of 'social' and 'cultural capital', in sum, with processes of recruitment. Proximate structuration, in this context , refers to processes of cohesion and solidarity. On this level, discussion of interlocking directorates, common membership of exlusive organisations, kinship ties, personal ties of friendship and acquaintance, shared forms of sociability, may be appropriate. In the sense that shared educational venues may reinforce commonality of background and transmit common cultural values, aspects of educational experience may also be relevant to this level.

Again these processes are clearly related and indeed may overlap but they also need to be kept analytically separate if the significance of different phenomena is to be assessed. In particular any discussion of forms of elite sociability is evidently concerned with a more limited aspect of class structuration. The analytical significance of sociability will be returned to later. For the moment, as this chapter later discusses forms of sociability

among a pool of candidates for a nominal economic elite, brief consideration may be given to sociological discussion of this latter area.

The Economic Elite

The sociological literature on economic and corporate elites in advanced capitalist societies is vast and it would be superfluous to embark on a systematic survey here.[3] However, a number of selective observations may be made in order to contextualise the discussion of sociability.

As noted previously, many discussions take their cue from the managerialist theories of the corporation and the class structure which have been popular since Berle and Means (1932) published their famous book. Two recent and representative examples from each side of the Atlantic are works by Scott (1978) and Useem (1980), both of whom offer trenchant if well rehearsed critiques of the managerialist position. Both authors note the heavy concentration of corporate capital. This domination of the corporate economy by a relatively small number of major corporations is seen to give added poignance to processes of recruitment to and integration of the leaderships of these organisations, the corporate elite. The corporate elite is shown to be well integrated into capitalistic interests; as substantial owners of capital, as dependent on corporate profitability for income and in terms of their own definitions of their interests. Few behaviour differences are discernible between so-called manager-controlled and owner-controlled corporations; corporate managers must act as if they were owners. To all intents and purposes, the corporate elite is a capitalist elite.

Scott argues that the evidence points inescapably to the emergence of two major trends in the structure of the modern corporation. Firstly there has been a shift from personal to impersonal possession of capital. Secondly,

there is a corresponding shift in strategic control towards 'control through a constellation of interests', that is where effective possession lay with a loose grouping of major corporate shareholders, none of which individually is strong enough to control strategic policy. Corporate shareholders are themselves subject to the same forms of control, one in which financial institutions play an important part. In fact, Scott argues, such is the degree of connectedness of control between major industrial and financial organisations that this distinction is becoming increasingly spurious. In this situation, strategic control is normally exercised through influence pumped through the considerable network of interlocking directorships which operate as channels of communication for information about companies. Financial corporations are seen to act as the nerve centre of these networks. This is a view supported by the evidence marshalled by Useem (1980) and the often quoted work of Zeitlin (1974).

The field of corporate interlocks has been well ploughed, but is worth dwelling on here for its twin significance. Corporate interlocks are clearly important in terms of the development of the concentrated corporate sector as a whole as a way of managing interdependencies between companies. However, at another level they also have significance in terms of the integration of the corporate elite as an economic, social and perhaps, political elite. Hence there is a strong relationship between the internal logic of business corporations at the strategic level and wider processes of class structuration, though again there is yet a further leap to be made to the mediation of control.[4]

Corporate interlocks through interlocking directorships appear to be a predominant feature of the corporate world in advanced capitalism, though more insidious links between organisations may be equally significant. The

increasing density of interlocks in Britain and their pervasiveness among the heights of the United States economy have been shown by, among others, Stanworth and Giddens (1975) and Pennings (1980) respectively. Interestingly Pennings shows, by way of something of a corrective to the teleology embodied in some neo-Marxist analyses that interlocks develop because they conform to the intra organisational logic of major business organisation and not because they provide channels of communication and bonds of solidarity among the ruling class or even corporate elite. The social and political outcomes of interlocks need, in other words, to be separated from their economic logic. The author confirms previous research on the density of interlocks, the recurrance of a small group of individuals and organisations in the process of interlock formation and the crucial role of financial organisations. The latter are also shown to develop interlocks for primarily instrumental reasons, that is with their best and biggest clients in order to enhance their own competitive position.

It is clear then that the primary meaning of interlocks lies in the dynamics of the corporate capitalist enterprise rather than in class relations though they obviously have implications for the latter. Overall, the research shows considerable concentration of economic resources, considerable interdependence between units of capital, common membership of large corporate organisations in a network of intercorporate linkages, the sharing of strategic roles in major corporations by a relatively small collection of individuals who are firmly embedded in the world of corporate wealth and property and imbued with the values of the capitalist enterprise. At the very least it shows that there are the necessary conditions for the formation of an economic elite. It still remains, however, to situate the role of sociability in this process of elite structuration.

Recruitment, Integration and the Role of Sociability

There has been a long tradition of research in Britain on the social backgrounds of members of various elites, as succeeding generations of academics are struck by the impressively permanent air of exlusivity which cloaks the British upper class. The undoubted changes in patterns of recruitment to these ranks seem imperceptible to many observers, compared to the apparent resilience of the overall structure.

While acknowledging the considerable methodological difficulties in studying recruitment processes, Giddens and Stanworth (1978) indicate that recruitment to the elites in major institutional spheres of British society is still relatively exclusive. There is some evidence of widening bands of recruitment but these go little beyond the reaches of the upper and professional middle class. A similar pattern is evident in respect of the British corporate elite. The same authors report that recruits for successive cohorts of directors in leading financial and industrial corporations between 1900 and 1970 were drawn predominantly from the upper class, though there is evidence of a decline in this tendency for 'industrial' sector directors. Financial directors on the other hand, are drawn more consistently from the upper class. This contention is consistent with the interesting thesis of Rubinstein (1974), that the first step in the process of the unification of the British upper class was the raprochement reached towards the end of the last century between the traditional landed elite and the London-based financial and commercial bourgeoisie (c.f. also Wiener 1981). The landed upper class became more favourably disposed towards the 'City' as an avenue for some of its offspring and the successful dynasties seemed to be those which kept up their contact with finance and commerce. This observation provides a hypothesis to explore later, namely that it might be expected that 'financial' interests would show a greater interest in the traditional pursuits of the

landed upper class - such as horse-racing - than the industrial pursuits.

A number of studies have testified to the persisting and increasing importance of a relatively narrow kind of educational experience as a mode of entry to eventual elite positions in the corporate world. For the vast majority of the corporate elite, attendance at fee paying schools, and for those consuming higher education attendance at Oxbridge, is the norm. This is a tendency which is more exaggerated for the financial sector. Indeed the corporate elite in this sphere also displays a tendency to share experience of one exclusive school, Eton (Whitely, 1974; Giddens and Stanworth, 1978; Fidler, 1981).

The present empirical study also found support for this observation. Of 392 multiple directors drawn from the leading 250 industrial and financial companies in 1976, 66.1% attended fee paying schools and 20.7% attended Eton or Harrow. Of the purely industrial and financial directors, 57.6% and 74.3% respectively attended public schools. Of those with a foot in both camps, 76.1% was the corresponding total. Again the highest proportions attending Eton or Harrow were to be found among the financial directors, 31.4% compared with 10.3% and 29% for the industrials and industrial/financials respectively. Similar patterns emerge when higher education is considered. Of the whole sample, at least 33.2% (the total included those about whom no information was available) of industrials attended Oxbridge, as did 54.3% of financials and 50% of industrial/financials. These proportions are much higher, of course, when computed as a percentage of those attending higher education of any sort. The respective figures then are 76.3%, 82.6% and 78.4%. These figures are high compared to other research but it should be remembered that the sample was restricted to leading multiple directors, that is to candiates for

the intercorporate elite. A similar accentuation of trends was found by Stanworth and Giddens (1974b) when the focus was restricted to company chairmen, positions which seemed to be filled from an increasingly narrow recruitment base.

Table I Educational Experience of Multiple Directors of the leading 250 Companies in Britain, 1976 (n = 392)

	Education					
	Eton/ Harrow	Other Public	Grammar Tech.	Elementary Sec.Mod.	Oxbridge	Other Univer.
	%					
Multiple Directors by Sector						
Industrial	10.3	47.3	17.2	2.7	33.2	10.3
Financial	31.4	42.9	18.6	0	54.3	11.4
Financial & Industrial	29.0	47.1	11.6	1.4	50.0	13.8
All Multiple Directors	20.7	46.4	15.6	1.8	42.9	11.7

See the Appendix following this Chapter for details of the sample.

It is difficult to find evidence in other countries which closely parallels the situation in Britain. This much is conceded by Useem, for example, for the U.S.A. though it is claimed that certain educational institutions continue to provide "valuable credentials for rapid ascent, not so much in Government service (as in Britain) as in corporate hierarchies" (1980, p.56). The work of Marceau (1977, 1978, 1981) suggests that while recruitment to the corporate elite in France is restricted and that certain institutions are crucial to career paths, recruitment has become wider and credentialism more significant.

However, while mostly circumstantial and patchy, much of the evidence points to the conclusion that the corporate elite is still firmly embedded in the world of the corporate rich and property and to this extent is largely self-recruiting if not totally exclusive (Scott 1979). It is also clear that the corporate elite is becoming increasingly technocratic (Fidler 1981) as both credentials and 'cultural capital' (Bordieu 1971) become necessary for access to high positions of authority in the corporate hierarchy. Thus the structuration of the propertied class depends less on the tranmission of property through ineritance than through the patrimonial transmission of 'cultural capital'. This may be argued to have left the control of the corporate hierachy in the customary hands even though the link between family property and control is broken. This would be a mode of structuration appropriate to the structure of what Scott (1979) has termed 'control through a constellation of interests' in the corporate world.

As with the phenomenon of the corporate interlock, recruitment processes have an additional significance for the question of elite coherence and cohesion, though it is one frequently over-stretched in the literature. Nevertheless, the recruitment of individuals with prescribed forms of cultural capital and credentials, acquired by passage through similar institutions obviously increases the likelihood that candidates for the corporate elite will share in the value systems, interests and world views of current members, a process which will be reinforced by experience of the corporate environment itself. More generally, commonality of background and educational experience might be expected to encourage the persistance of common values across elites in different spheres. Such processes, however, neither guarantee coherance, nor, still less, a basis for common action, though they are important contingent conditions. A less cautious view has usually prevailed in

the literature, where frequently, unproblematic leaps are made from common social backgrounds to cohesive groups and ideologies and then to concerted action in the mediation of control.[5]

Cohesion is clearly a necessary condition for such action. However, while the notion of intra-capitalist class divisions has probably been exaggerated, the potential for differentiation and division in the economic elite consequent upon the division of labour, sectoral cleavages and hierarchial divisions in business, means that coherance is also very problematic. (Useem, 1978; Poulantzas, 1975; Longstreth, 1979).

A number of other processes commonly reported in the literature, nevertheless, may also be said to be supportive of cohesion insofar as they provide structured opportunities for non-competitive, personal contact between members of the corporate elite conducive to the development of a "common identity, perspective and friendship" (Useem 1980, p.54). These processes include the exchange of personnel and resources between corporations including the network of interlocks discussed earlier. The latter indeed possibly consititute the pre-eminent solidary bond for the economic elite. Various kinds of associational links such as overlapping board memberships of prestigious non-business organisations may also be seen in this light.

In this context, however, most attention has been focussed on the important role of exclusive social clubs (Mills, 1957; Whitely, 1974; Domhoff, 1974, 1975) for the corporate elite on both sides of the Atlantic. Data from the present study (to be discussed more fully in Section C) supports the observations of Whitely on the importance of the London Clubs in the British context. It was found, for example, that 20.7% of multiple industrial

directors, 32.9% of multiple financials and 38.4% of multiple industrial and financial directors from the leading 250 industrial and financial organisations displayed memberships of the most prestigious London Clubs. These proportions increase substantially when the outer periphery of clubs is included. Many individuals held multiple memberships and many of these also traversed the more and less prestigious clubs. Speaking of the American counterpart, Useem points to part of the significance of the clubs as they "provide the convenient, relaxed and intimate setting in which business leaders sustain old acquaintanceships and establish new ones" (1980, p.56). They also play an important role, it is argued, in ensuring contact between managers and principal owners of large capital as many members of the clubs are also provided by wealthy patrician families.

Domhoff (1975) has gone further and suggested that there is an overlap in the memberships of the prestigious club networks and a number of key policy formulation organisations and major business policy associations. This is seen as having a unifying effect and represents a major means by which ideas and norms of the 'ruling class' are relayed to the business sector. The network is seen to be crucial to the political cohesion of the corporate elite and its ability to formulate common strategies and bases for action. Domhoff here makes a useful distinction between social and policy cohesion but moves too readily into the domain of elite decision making and action. In so doing, the analysis suffers from what Pennings (1980) labels the 'black box' syndrome which refers to that intervening area between inputs or social interests and outputs or policy decisions. This area - precisely the area of the mediation of control - remains empirically very much in the dark. What the literature clearly lacks at present is careful, ethnographic, inside research into the operation of clubs, business policy organisations, the internal dealings of the pinnacle of the corporate hierarchy, and their

interrelation. Nevertheless, the extensive participation of nominal members of the business elite in common forms of association and sociability is an important observation in terms of the issue of elite cohesion.

While it is possible to identify a number of factors in this way which are relevant to the question of cohesion, considerable disagreement exists over their precise weighting and significance. One important aspect of this conceptual discord concerns the relevance of different factors to the two processes of solidarity and sociability. Solidarity has been defined by two writers following Durkheim, as applying to "co-operation between unlike individuals and more importantly, between groups which are unlike". (Alcorn and Marsh 1975, p.21). Sociability alternatively, concerns friendships and interpersonal relationships, patterns of interaction, which are prized for their own sake. It follows that while solidarity may be necessary for common purpose and action, sociability alone is neither sufficient nor, arguably, necessary, though in practice it seems to be an important contingent factor. Solidarity, further, derives not from sociable relations but from common material interests and interdependencies. However, sociability may be important in contributing to the recognition and subjective experience of those interests, and in this sense, an important contingent adjunct to solidarity.

In these terms it is clear that much of the discussion concerning elite structuration has focussed on the contribution of elite sociability but rarely has this been explicitly acknowledged or allowed to inform the weighting of different phenomena. In retrospect, it is evident that the reason why corporate interlocks receive such prominence in the literature is that they have clear implications for solidarity and not merely sociability. They concern relations of dependence between a large number of position holders

in the corporate elite. That these are frequently locked into extensive ties of sociability is an important but essentially secondary characteristic.

In general terms, sociability is at least two steps removed from the mediation of control and clearly it also cannot substitute for more material bases of solidarity. Nevertheless, sociability is very likely to be important as a reinforcer of the 'habitus' in Bordieu's (1971) terms, that is, "that system of dispositions which acts as a mediation between structures and practice". (1973, p.72). The issue of sociability then is not to be dismissed but its importance must be properly situated and thus the significance of empirical aspects of sociability weighted accordingly.

However, it is also clear that the literature has concerned itself with a limited number of forms of sociability and in particular, has almost totally neglected various forms of elite leisure patterns, although their potential importance has been suggested by a number of writers. In his study of the corporate leadership of the British retail sector for example, Berkeley-Thomas found that in terms of corporate interlocks the retail sector was less well integrated into the corporate world and less internally integrated than other sectors, for reasons specific to the nature of retailing. However, the author observes, albeit casually, that in any event "It may well be that the golf course is far more important in these matters than the boardroom" (1978, p.323). This observation, of course, in conflating unproblematically processes of solidarity and sociability makes the error discussed above. It will be evident why this author seized on golf for his observation though it is not researched by him.

The purpose of the ensuing discussion will be to pursue the theme of elite lesure patterns more systematically, with particular reference to

participation in the still fairly exclusive pastime of horse-racing. Having situated the possible analytical relevance of findings on elite sociability for the process of elite structuration, attention will be focussed on the leisure patterns of a corporate economic elite.

First, however, it is important to turn to the role and changing forms of upper class sociability historically, and to examine the place of racing among these forms. This discussion will show that racing, while experiencing profound internal developments, represented one important element of continuity in upper class culture, one clearly recognisable to established and aspiring groups alike, and it may be added, one which continues to find echoes in these terms towards the end of the twentieth century. The historical focus will also permit an examination of the process which represents the reverse side of the significance so far attributed to sociability in structuration, namely, from the point of view of aspiring groups, the crucial space it provides for social emulation.

Elite Sociability: Historical Perspective

It is a commonplace among historians to note the neglect of 'leisure' in social and economic history (Plumb, 1973; Cunningham, 1980). However, in recent years a start has been made in the business of rectifying this omission, at least with respect to Britain. As Cunningham argues, this is partly due to the growth of the relatively new sectoral specialism of social history, but more importantly it seems closely related with the emergence of what Johnson (1979) has termed the 'new history' and this in turn appears closely aligned with an amorphous brand of 'cultural Marxism'. What is distinctive about the new history is its prime concern with the culture of the people, with experience and with a renewed interest in the problem of consciousness. As Johnson argues, this change of focus required a break with

the "restricted categories of labour history" (1979, p.58) and that the notion of culture be relieved of its elitist or narrowly literary connotations. The 'new history' has thus been productive of a growing number of rich histories of various dimensions of the life of the people and popular culture, including recreational and leisure activities.

Inevitably, an early result of this work was the growing recognition of the political dimensions of recreation and sociability. However, there appear to have been relatively few attempts to systematise the contributions of the many case studies into a sustained discussion of the intersection of politics and leisure. A limited exception perhaps is Cunningham's **Leisure in the Industrial Revolution** (1980), which attempts to explicitly situate the development of leisure in the context of class relations and class struggle in the nineteenth century.

However, while adopting this commendable relational perspective, this text is symptomatic of the genre in that its major focus is down towards the bottom of the social structure. While it is recognised that there is an interplay between popular and high culture, the latter itself receives relatively short shrift. To an extent this imbalance follows from the value and methodological presuppositions of the new history but if experience and consciousness as expressed in culture is crucial to an understanding of the development of the working class, a relational perspective requires that this be equally so in the case of the upper class. Paradoxically, while much has been written about elite culture in general terms, within the discipline of social history, more seems to have been assumed than systematically researched. This is slightly ironic because as Cunningham points out, it really only becomes meaningful to talk of 'leisure' as a distinct concept with the emergence of what was virtually a leisure class based on landed wealth

in the eighteenth century. Thompson (1963) suggests for example, that for much of the landed aristocracy London society life was occupation enough while the chief interest of others lay in hunting, shooting or racing. The general point is reinforced by Plumb (1973) in his programmatic mapping of the early commercialisation of leisure; the initial demand for leisure services came from the upper classes. That leisure was the invention of the eighteenth century upper class would be an extremely banal observation if one could not also point to the dearth of scholarly research on elite leisure patterns of the period and their significance. Needless to say a few worthwhile discussions are available and will be referred to in due course.

To talk of the 'upper classes' in this way is, however, to fail to acknowledge what most writers agree was the very complex nature of the class structure in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and the hierarchy of status groups within the upper class itself. The relations between the landed aristocracy and the gentry, to say nothing of the stratification of landed society as a whole, have occupied the attention of historians for generations and no attempt can be made to resolve these difficult questions here. However, in the following discussion the term 'landed aristocracy' will be used to refer to the wealthiest, titled stratum of society, while acknowledging with Perkin that:

> "By the eighteenth century only a handful of English peers could claim continuity in the male line from a medieval feudal grant: all the rest owed their status to their property."
>
> (Perkin, 1969, p.39)

The latter consideration of the role of property also meant that considerable blurring existed between this group and the wealthiest stratum of the gentry,

a term which also masks a hierarchy of landed property owners (Mingay, 1976). Both broad groups, however, may be seen as constituting an agrarian capitalist class, either in the form of rentiers or direct exploiters of labour power on the land and may be referred to as a whole as simply the upper classes.

There is, nevertheless, still some debate on the degree of openness of the upper classes in this period which, as with most debates on mobility, tends to hinge on the restrictiveness with which the respective categories are drawn. Thompson (1963) suggests for example, that in practice they were less open that is often suggested, though on closer reading his argument appears relevant only to the upper reaches, the wealthiest and most ancient noble families. The landed aristocracy as a whole and even more so the gentry, appear to have been relatively receptive, as Mingay (1976) argues, to new wealth.

However, the complex and relatively heterogeneous nature of the hierarchy of status groups within the landed ruling class together with the total system of patronage (Perkin, 1969) provided the space for leisure and sociability to assume significance. First, because in the face of such differences sociability becomes a potentially important factor of cohesion and second, because as Plumb (1973) indicates, such complexity creates the conditions under which social emulation (an important moment of patronage structures) becomes an important adjunct to mobility, and a prime vehicle for social emulation is the sphere of leisure. The roots of solidarity, of course, lay in the common interest in land and its exploitation but as Thompson suggests, the landed aristocracy was tied by a common cultural bond crystallised in the conveniently elusive notion of gentility with its important core of paternalism. Further emphasising the role of sociability

and commonality of background, Thompson suggests that:

> "The real element of uniformity was imparted by the upbringing in the atmosphere of life in an aristocratic household" which was "a powerful influence in maintaining the aristocracy as a closed circle ... since the conditions were not easily reproduced except in the country house surrounded by its parks and estates and the affinities of those brought up in such surroundings were naturally with their own kind, while with outsiders there was a lack of common interests as well as suspicion of alien ways."
>
> (1963, p.87)

As is apparent from accounts to be discussed later, the country house was very much the seat of upper class rural sociability even for the gentry who Thompson suggests resembled those above them in many ways except for the scale of possessions and life style. A common, pervasive cultural link (Mingay, 1976) enabled the upper reaches of landed society to cohere despite the status distinctions. An important factor in that culture, it may be argued, was sociability in its various forms including sport and other leisure activities.

Social emulation through leisure also appeared to be particularly pertinent to the gradual accommodation of commercial-bourgeois and upper landed interests a century or so later in the last half of the nineteenth century. As many writers have pointed out (c.f. Rubinstein, 1974) this was essentially a process of mutual accommodation; the landed upper class adapted to the attitudes and postures of business commerce and trade as the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie aped the life-style and leisure patterns of the aristocracy.[6] Established life-styles and status props are useful supports for emergent power groups. Such processes are particularly evident in the rise of families such as the Rothschilds for example (see below).

Cunningham (1980) has recently questioned the emphasis in many studies

of (particularly working class) leisure on the intra as opposed to inter-class implications of leisure patterns. In the case of working class leisure this represented an important corrective. However, it may be argued that the intra class implications of elite leisure patterns are in view of the above also not to be neglected. Before looking at these in more detail however, some other general observations on this area may be made.

Plumb (1973) has argued that the growth in commercialised leisure in the eighteenth century was a function of the growing affluence of the upper and middle classes combined with the availability of print and the Western alphabet. Whether or not these represented real conditions for such a take-off, the growth of activities, their systematisation and commercialisation, displayed a great deal of ingenuity and creativity. One of the effects of the new history, especially following the influence of the work of E. P. Thompson (1963, 1974) was an emphasis on the creative aspects of popular culture, a rejection of the 'vacuum theory' of the development of working class leisure during the Industrial Revolution for example, the insistence that people make their own history and culture in creative acts. Consistency requires that a similar assumption be made concerning elite culture for it was also creative and dynamic.

Plumb's assertion that there was an essential continuity in upper class culture as a whole between the early eighteenth and twentieth century can only be maintained at a high level of generality. This obscures the specific developments in particular pastimes, the disengagement of upper class and popular culture and the changing power relations mirrored in leisure activities such as the replacement of the gentry by the aristocracy in the control of horse-racing for example. Hence the static impression which tends to be generated with the discussion of individual pursuits should not mask the

dynamism of the culture as a whole. As with Cunningham's observation in respect of popular culture, a close reading of forms of elite sociability also defies a rigid periodisation in terms of pre- or post- this or that, revolution.

It has been suggested above that there has been little explicit focus in the historical literature on leisure as a form of sociability with implications for class formation per se. However, an important qualification must be added to this observation for what follows, because of the ease with which it is possible to fall into the trap of teleology. Hence it should be emphasised that whatever their sociological significance, leisure activities and pastimes were developed primarily for the purpose of amusement and entertainment, even though an important aspect of such amusement was sociable mixing with like individuals.

Elite Sociability: General Themes and Observations

A number of themes and observations are evident in the scattered fragments of literature on elite leisure patterns in Britain in the modern bourgeois era and these may be briefly mentioned before particular pastimes are discussed in more detail. Both Cunningham (1980) and Plumb (1973) have noted the expansion and subsequent commercialisation of upper class leisure following the Restoration. The former emphasises further that the leisure class which emerged was both urban and rural. The gentry nurtured its own class specific sports of shooting, hunting and racing to run parallel with activities in Town, the major provincial towns and later, the Spas.

Many writers have also noted the rejuvenating effects of the great railway expansion of the mid-nineteenth century on all forms of leisure including that of the upper class (Margetson, 1980; Walvin, 1976; Cunningham, 1980). Somewhat ironically the imminent onslaught of the railways was

viewed with considerable misgiving by the sponsors of upper class country sports though the changes which were undoubtedly wrought by this development were not those anticipated.[7] In the case of hunting the railways merely delayed the decline of the sport made inevitable by the gradual eclipse of agrarian society on which it was based, while in the case of racing its position as the first national spectator sport was enhanced, as, temporarily, was the situation of a number of petty racecourse entrepreneurs before the racing aristocrats called 'order' once again (Vamplew, 1976).

The expansion of specifically upper class leisure also coincided with a disengagement of the upper class from popular culture (Malcolmson, 1973; Mingay, 1976; Thompson, 1963). Hitherto, as Malcolmson suggests, many popular pastimes of the people required the active participation of the gentry as an extension of normal deferential relationships. Growing upper class intolerance of popular tradition seemed to be broadly a function of two interrelated processes. The spread of the ideology of labour discipline (halting and resisted as this was) implied the need to control wasteful occupations as work and recreation became increasingly polarised (Thompson 1967). Secondly and quite crudely, the enclosure movement undermined the material basis for many popular recreations. Malcolmson suggests the existence of two dominant types of social outlook towards leisure in the eighteenth century, the 'traditional conservative' and the 'bourgeois'. The latter did not begin to emerge victorious until 1750, though as Cunningham (1980) shows, it continued to be contested for another 100 years in the towns and had even less effect in the country where the gentry remained relatively well disposed to some popular recreations, though mainly, it could be argued, because of the opportunity these afforded for gambling (Malcolmson, 1973). In any event most writers agree that the culture of gentility became increasingly separated from that of the people.

The increasingly class bounded nature of leisure and the retreat of the upper class behind exclusive and enclosed spaces and arenas was also as Cunningham (1980) argues, difficult to square with the prevalent nineteenth century ideology of class conciliation through leisure. The reality of this aspiration was also eroded by (among many other reasons) the tendency of the new middle class, among the most ardent purveyors of this and the ideology of rational recreation, to seek leisure in exclusive status enhancing settings. Cunningham argues that this predisposition enabled a number of tottering, upper class leisure interests, such as musical performances and hunting, to survive as these aspirants brought not only new blood but also new money.

Social emulation through leisure then is also a process noted by writers as characteristic of particularly late nineteenth century upper class leisure patterns. Margetson (1980) argues for example, that the upper class social gatherings provided aspirant second and third generation industrialists with opportunities in the attempt to gain acceptance by conforming to aristocratic standards of behaviour. Mingay (1976) also suggests that the sharing of country sports and other social activities also aided the penetration of the local political strongholds of the gentry - the magistracy and the county councils - by the urban bourgeoisie. However, this factor needs to be viewed in the context of other processes aiding cultural similarities, namely education.

Mingay with other writers (Margetson, 1980• Cunningham, 1980) also notes the role of participation in the sports of gentlemen and other aspects of country life in the integration and cohesion of the gentry. Margetson notes if somewhat eccentrically:

> "But most of the guests were already familiar with each other and if this sometimes led to an intolerable state of boredom, it also encouraged a feeling of upper class solidarity."
>
> (1980, p.42)

The problems with making the conceptual leaps implicit in this statement have already been extensively discussed, but this is a common view. It is also evident that some leisure activities, as will be clear from the discussion of hunting below, were indeed prime sites for the symbolic accommodation between the traditional upper class and the monied middle class.

Upper class leisure it might be added, finally, was an expensive business. Thompson (1971) suggests for example that £10,000 per annum was a realistic basis for enjoying an aristocratic life-style unless racing was involved when it could be considerably more. However, these themes may be more fully illustrated through a brief discussion of major forms of sociability in this period.

Forms of Elite Sociability in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

A number of writers point to the pivotal role of the country house in the life styles of the landed aristocracy whose prime attachment according to Margetson (1980) was indeed to the country. Mingay refers to the country house as the 'theatre of hospitality, leisure and sport' and even for the middle gentry, the country house tended to involve huge domestic expenditures, hospitality being its essential function though entertaining also tended to be a local affair. The country houses also provided the vehicle for conspicuous consumption in the form of house gardens and parks and so on. However, lavish house parties and entertainments, often lasting weeks, were routine features of the great country houses at least. Margetson (1980)

suggests that house parties tended to be made up of the same people from one country house to the next, albeit with a coterie of social climbers and 'hangers-on' who had managed to find favour. These the author suggests were men of talent in literature or science, up and coming members of Parliament and bankers and industrialists of the second and third generation, searching for acceptance by apeing the life-style of the upper classes.

The acquisition of a large country house and estate in the nineteenth century indeed became a symbol of arrival and status for this latter group of men of business (Wiener, 1981). Descended from lowly Prussian Jewry, the rise of Meyer Rothschild and his family into high society provides a paradigmatic, if spectacular, example of this process. The friendship cultivated with the Prince of Wales (an able lubricant of the country house and 'fast racing set' as this group came to be known), the development of Mentmore Towers and its racing stables, the marriage of his daughter to the Earl of Rosebery, were important ingredients in the absorption of the family into the British upper class.

Important functions of country house life especially in the eighteenth century, hence, were the making and remaking of kinship ties between the closely related aristocratic and gentry families, the transmission of a common culture and the reaffirmation of a shared identify (Thompson, 1971). However, apart from the problem of expense, even the upper classes could not completely ignore the new meanings ascribed to time in industrial capitalist society (Thomas, 1964) and extended country house socialising tended to give way to the more disciplined dinner party in popularity in the Victorian era. These were normally rather ritualistic occasions but could also often involve considerable expense. Rothschild generated a reputation for his lavish dinner parties for example, (Margetson, 1980). In the 1890's

the popularity of dinner parties as a form of sociability was eroded by the newly fashionable hotel restaurants which attracted 'fashionable society' as one of the places 'to be seen'.

Whatever their attachment to the country, however, the landed upper classes were always prone to the annual migrations to the town (Thompson, 1971). In this the London Season, gradually institutionalised following the Restoration, held a special attraction and continued to do so throughout the nineteenth century though the components of the Season changed and assumed different significances. The commercialisation of theatre and music (Plumb, 1973) of course made the capital a more interesting place in the eighteenth century, that is apart from the lure of Court, its role as a marriage market and the general ambience created by the upper classes at play. For the nineteenth century, Margetson (1980) argues that the London Season was the most important ritual observed by the Victorian upper class. The Season comprised a seeingly endless round of receptions in the West End town houses where social, political and military elite figures clearly abounded, so-called 'drawing rooms' where debutantes were presented, palace musical and garden parties as well as the more energetic activities of monopolising fashionable space in Hyde Park, the Henley Regatta, Goodwood and perhaps the highlight of the season, Royal Ascot. In all these, ostentatious display appeared to be the organising principle.

In the eighteenth century imitations of the London Season were developed in the fast growing spa resorts in which the dubious spa waters were probably the least of the attractions. As Plumb argues "the main business of the spas was amusement ... dancing, theatre, music and reading and, of course, flirting and making love ..." (1973, p.19). The author argues that the spas continued to thrive until the end of the century when the

notion of a holiday for a holiday's sake took root, whence the sea-side resorts came into their own, especially under Royal patronage.

One important aspect of sociability at least among upper class males which seems to have grown in significance until this day is the London Club. These exclusive institutions grew out of the seventeenth and eighteenth century coffee houses which, as Plumb points out, were a prime locus of information and gossip, political and social, national and international, at a time when communications were still extremely primitive. The coffee houses were also one of the institutions which nurtured the infant newspaper business, so important in Plumb's eyes for the commercialisation of leisure, as they allowed patrons to read available papers and magazines for a small fee. Some of the clubs which developed around St. James's from this beginning acquired rather unsavoury reputations, but in the 1840's Margetson (1980) argues a new generation of clubs was born which formed the hub of present day 'Clubland'. Significantly, most of these Clubs were situated within walking distance of the seat of government on the one hand and the playground of fashionable society on the other.

As the author suggests:

> "No other situation could have been more convenient and no other institutions gave the male sex quite the same facilities for social, political and intellectual intercourse."
>
> (1980, p.102).

In addition the Clubs were class exclusive as well as having their own varying peculiar qualification rules.

The somewhat dubious reputation which some of the Clubs acquired was

due primarily to their associations with gambling which was a major preoccupation of the landed upper class in the eighteenth century and well into the first quarter of the nineteenth (Longrigg, 1977). Fuller (1974), indeed suggests that gambling was the major, if not the sole, activity of the Clubs in the eighteenth century. The growth of gambling in the eighteenth century will be touched upon the Chapter Three; however, it would be difficult to underestimate the pervasiveness of gambling in eighteenth and early nineteenth century upper class culture which indeed nurtured a great variety of forms of recreational gambling (Ashton, 1898). Upper class gamblers also showed little discrimination in the kind of events on which a bet was considered possible. Indeed the early eighteenth century South Sea Bubble scandal is often seen as symptomatic of the gambling 'mania' (Fuller, 1974) of the time. Further, not until the 1845 Gaming Act was finally, if only symbolically, differentiated from legitimate forms of risky economic activity.[8]

Gambling was a thread which interwove forms of socialising and sporting activities. Indeed as many writers point out, one of the factors which slowed down the retreat of the landed aristocracy and gentry from popular pastimes and sports, mollifying the hardening attitude to popular tradition, was the opportunity many of these activities offered for gambling (Longrigg, 1974; Malcolmson, 1973; Cunningham, 1980). Pugilism and especially cockfighting were popular gambling media with the gentry. Both had to contend with the criticism that they encouraged open class fraternisation though upper class supporters were adept at rationalising their participation. Cocking was held to be unquestioning proof of the truth of the 'laws of breeding' and hence an allegory for the legitimacy of the position of the upper class which the 'people' could understand' (Longrigg, 1977). Activities such as cock-fighting, however, were not able to seriously survive the 'reform

of manners' and the early Victorian reaction to the profligacy of the Regency period, besides which opportunities for gambling in more exclusive and slightly more legitimate forms became more attractive. With systematisation in racing for example, went attempts to improve its integrity, particularly in the 1830's and 40's during the reign of Lord Bentick at the Jockey Club, which followed the damaging racing scandals of the first decades of the century. Nevertheless, it is true that racing despite the patronage of aristocratic nobles and Royalty retained its dissolute character in the eyes of many because of the gambling connection (Vamplew 1976, Margetson 1980). However, while perhaps more disciplined and less ostentatious, gambling retained an important place in the leisure practices of the upper class. One such practice which experienced both a dramatic rise in popularity and arguably in equally dramatic decline before the end of the nineteenth century (though its legacy remains today) was fox hunting. Two excellent histories of fox hunting have recently been produced though hunting has attracted comment from a number of social historians for some time.[9]

Fox hunting appears to be the specific creation of the landed gentry in the late eighteenth century. Hunting anything and everything with harriers had been a popular activity among the gentry throughout the eighteenth century (Longrigg, 1977) but the breeding of fast hounds to hunt the specific quarry of the fox with horses was an idea whose sporting potential was first recognised by Hugo Neynell who became Master of the Quorn in 1753. According to Itzkowitz (1977), Meynell's revolution was the first of three major turning points in the history of fox hunting. This modern form of hunting first took root in the geographically favourable Leicestershire around the town of Melton Mowbray. The fledgling sporting press aided the passage of the exploits of the Meltonians and the Melton season as a whole, to national notoriety. The prestigious Quorn became a model for hunts

throughout the country, transforming hunting actitivies. The 1780's saw a real explosion of interest in hunting among the gentry and then aristocracy, rapidly displacing the popularity of other field sports and the author argues, indirectly moulding the patterns of country life for a further century. Between 1800 and 1820 hunting became a national sport for the upper classes. Itzkowtiz argues, however, that its significance lies in the mystique of hunting which helped elevate it to the level of a national institution assuming an importance out of all proportion to its role as mere sport. Hunting became the embodiment of 'englishness' and the 'country'.[10] The mystique was an idealised conception of hunting which amounted to a mythology but the myth harboured some aspects of reality and in time came to act back on reality in realising some of its elements.

Hunting saw itself as the integrating factor of country life as a whole, as developing bonds between neighbours and mutual obligations between hunters and non-hunters alike. The myth emphasised the intrinsic qualities of hunting as healthy exercise, 'good for the soul', a foil for the effete ways of city life, but also its social functions. Hunting was seen to keep country gentlemen <u>in</u> in the country and hence fulfilling their obligations in traditional society. Later, as the epitome of country life, hunting was seen to reaffirm hardy values of manliness, Britishness and patriotism, counterbalancing the forces of radicalism and urbanism, binding the classes in landed society and generating a sense of community. Hunting presented itself in altruistic terms as a sport open to, and benefiting, all classes.

Much of this, of course, was illusory. Although the hunt was the hub around which a good deal of country sociability revolved for the upper classes and although hunting was a cohesive force providing for interaction

across classis, Itzkowtiz argues that it was essentially dependent. It performed these functions only because of the entrenchment of the existing structure of traditional society and deferential relationships. Interaction took place on the basis of an assumed hierarchy; such interaction obviously was not equal. In this sense, the author argues, hunting was supported by the existing social structure rather than vice versa. It would still be a mistake, however, to underestimate the integrating effects of the sport, both on the landed upper class itself and the rural class structure as a whole, though these were not sufficient alone to negate the conflicts of interest which were routinely generated between classes in the country.

The Golden Age of Hunting coincided with the Golden Age of British agriculture and was heralded by the railway revolution. The railways facilitated the great expansion of interest in hunting because of the opportunities afforded, and enabled the upper class city dweller to indulge the sport, though Itzkowtiz argues that ultimately this was its undoing. A hunting society was created which was alien to the conditions from which hunting had developed. However, the railways made social emulation of upper class habits connected with the country' a real possibility for the urban middle class as:

> "Fox hunting was a unique institution, carrying the greatest social catchet and looked to by many merely in search of social advancement ..."
>
> (1977, p.29)

Hunting was seen as a way in and up the social ladder by the growing numbers of newly enriched, urban middle class (Margetson, 1980), Itzkowitz suggests that it was at this juncture indeed that the social catchet attached to hunting began to supplant the hunt itself as the attraction with notions of

propriety consequently becoming of much greater importance. The size of hunting fields at this time often took on military proportions.

The reaction of the old hunting fraternity was bound to be ambivalent about this influx, as on the one hand it brought in new money to the hunts, while on the other hand this increasing presence of outsiders undermined the original character of the activity. In particular, the ideology of class harmony and familiarity depended on the close links between the hunt and the local community. The presence of outsiders eroded the notion of community and the outsiders themselves tended to be far less tolerant of local, lower class community involvement in the hunt - after all, their reference points were upwards not downwards. The hunting field never really overcame this dual structure of the old hunting society and the conspicuous newcomers.

However, the hunt continued its traditionalist appearance and atavistic celebration of the values of the earlier society and this, of course, continued to attract the urban bourgeoisie as well as the landed upper classes. The third turning point, the agricultural depression of the last quarter of the eighteenth century unleased the negative currents which had been suppressed by the earlier relative prosperity of the countryside. Conscious of the growing size of hunting fields, more concerted claims for compensation from farmers became inevitable and this division of interest increasingly eroded the symbolism of community. Farmers also claimed increased participation in the running of the hunt which, according to Itzkowtiz, questioned beyond recall the entire deferential basis of hunting society. The tendency to counter this with the introduction of minimum subscriptions further eroded the traditional claim of the openness of the hunt. However, these developments no more than reflected the decline of landed society in the

context of the depression:

> "The society whose values hunting had mirrored was changing irrevocably and hunting people had no choice but to follow suit."
>
> (1977, p.179)

The case of hunting offers a remarkable microcosm of landed society and the changes which afflicted it. However, it also epitomises many of the processes such as cohesion, social emulation, class accommodation and so on discussed earlier as a function of elite leisure and culture.

Much less has been written about other field sports such as shooting, for example. Shooting, however, was perhaps the most controversial pastime because of the antagonism which was generated by the Game Laws which were intended to maintain the exclusiveness of the sport for the upper landed classes. Cunningham (1980) argues that shooting began to be enveloped in class exclusiveness in the seventeenth century. The developing sophistication of shooting also meant that pressure grew to preserve game and restrict competition to those who were socially qualified, hence the game laws also grew in comprehensiveness and severity. By the turn of the nineteenth century shooting was a firmly established field sport, indeed Longrigg (1977) argues that pheasant shooting, like racing, became an industry as well as a sport. As Thompson argues, the attempt to maintain class exclusivity also had other significant consequences:

> "Shooting emphasised the solidarity of aristocracy and gentry, sitting together as magistrates trying poaching offences, and standing together at the butts."
>
> (Thompson, 1971, p.137)

Game shooting indeed has retained this exclusivity though more by expense than restrictive legislation. However, the future pattern of participation was firmly laid down in this period.

Upper class sociability then from the Restoration to the twentieth century, took a number of forms and developed in a number of innovative ways. Most of the accounts examined show that such sociability was an essential part of the life of the upper classes and a crucial ingredient in subjective class identity. It is against this backcloth that the role of racing in elite culture can now be examined.

Racing and Elite Culture

It is not the intention here to add to the already voluminous literature on the history of horse-racing although, in fact, there is only one serious social and economic history of the sport.[11] However, it is possible to abstract some observations which are relevant to the concerns of this chapter.

The cultural importance of racing in the post-Restoration era can be judged indirectly by the fact that as Plumb (1973) shows, one of the earliest uses of print for advertising purposes was in connection with horse-races. This as the author argues, also greatly aided the sytematisation and commercialisation of racing in the eighteenth century, as also significantly, it emerged as the first national, commercially organised sporting activity, (Vamplew, 1976). Indeed, in terms of publicity and commercialism, racing set the pace for other recreations including cockfighting and later, cricket (Malcolmson, 1974). Plumb (1973) rather curiously suggests that the steady growth in the popularity of racing in the eighteenth century was a function of growing middle class affluence and fascination for horses too expensive for them to own. This argument can only be sustained if by middle class is

meant the 'gentry and psuedo-gentry' to use his terms, for it need hardly be said that racing was the sport of the upper classes.

As Longrigg (1977) and Vamplew (1976) show, however, the gentry were the major force in the development of the modern form of racing from the court horse sports of the Tudors and Stuarts. While court patronage of racing continued to be important, the gentry broke the Royal monopoly of the sport and fashioned it for their own purposes. Originally these were very closely connected with horse breeding for which the races provided the element of quality control and a basis from which to develop calculative breeding. Indeed it was during this period of gentry dominance of racing that the term 'thoroughbred' was coined. The financial and organisational dependence of racing on the country gentry lasted through their 'Golden Age' to around the mid-point of the eighteenth century. The tentative beginnings of the relative decline of the gentry also coincided with its loss of hegemony over racing and the emergence of the powerful Whig landlord aristocrats as the national controlling element in racing with whom it remained for a couple of centuries (Mingay, 1976). In terms of organisation and participation at local level, however, the gentry continued as the backbone of the sport well into the nineteenth century though local control also became more problematic (Longrigg, 1977). It was under the dominance of the landed aristocracy that racing and breeding developed in strides commercially and became heavily associated with the gambling propensities of the post-Restoration era.

As has been shown by many writers, however, racing was extremely popular among the lower orders and thus, as later with hunting, had some important implications for inter-class relationships (Malcolmson, 1974; Bailey, 1978; Longrigg, 1977; Vamplew, 1976). A cause for frequent celebration in the writing of the history of racing is that it fostered a meeting and a

shared interest among the highest and lowest classes. However, as Newby (1977) argues, the maintenance of traditional authority and deferential relationships requires that, as far as possible, control is total, the same pattern re-occuring in any number of situations. So it was with recreation and racing. It was the gentry and aristocracy who controlled the meeting, acted as stewards and who were the major participants. For all the talk of contemporary and later writers about the relaxing of distinctions on Epsom Downs or at lesser meetings, interaction was strictly hierarchial and deferential. This was reinforced by commercialisation which heralded the racecourse enclosures, a graphic organisational representation of the class structure, and the grandstands to which entry was exclusive to those of landed wealth and noble birth. Far from operating as a leveller, the 'races' merely reaffirmed and reinforced traditional authority perhaps all the more effectively because of the sociable non-atagonistic nature of the occasion. The races like many other activities were an integral element of the total system of paternalism which, according to Perkin (1969), was one of the twin principles, along with property, of the 'old society'. However, the contribution of racing to class conciliation was a familiar theme among contemporary writers especially in the nineteenth century. Racing, unlike fieldsports and their association with the infamous Game Laws, brought the classes together. As Malcolmson argues:

> "Patronage, of course, was traditionally one of the major social functions of the governing class and it extended into many areas of social activity. Behind a large number of recreational events was the supporting prestige of largesse, often conspicuously displayed, of some prominent figure."
>
> (Malcolmson, 1974, p.57)

As evidence of the popularity of the view that the races fostered class harmony for example, both Cunningham (1970) and Bailey (1978) quote from

the 1844 Select Committee on gaming:

> "The Committee think it desirable that this amusement (racing) should be upheld because it is in accordance with a long established national taste, because it serves to bring together for a common object, vast bodies of people in different parts of the country, and to promote intercourse between different classes of society."
>
> (House of Lords Select Committee on Gaming, 1844)

This emphasis, of course, paralleled the wider impression management of the aristocracy of themselves as a class in tune with nature, rural life, the country and ultimately society as a whole.

As we have already noted with Cunningham, ultimately the hope of class conciliation through leisure was illusory. Equally it would be a mistake to neglect the contribution of institutions such as racing to the maintenance of a deferential society of which important symbolic elements remain today. Racing, like hunting, purveyed cultural values of intimidating weight, the notions of 'englishness' and patriotism for example. Further, as Bailey conveniently puts it:

> "... in their continuing presence on the Turf, the aristocracy showed themselves the custodians of certain of the great myths of the English at play -- the egalitarian bonhomie of the sporting fraternity ..."
>
> (1978, p.25)

Although as the author goes on to argue, such apologia provided some protection for popular participation in racing, this patronising position was not without its contradictions. The racing hierarchy itself tended to suffer, rather than openly welcome, such participation. Indeed, Acts of Parliament in 1711 and 1740 may be seen as clear attempts to exclude the poor and discourage popular involvement in racing (Malcolmson, 1974; Cunningham,

1980). Cunningham argues with some justification that racing was a sport created by the gentry specifically for themselves, they regarded the races as their property only tolerating spectators as long as they kept their place. The succeeding aristocrats of the Jockey Club adopted a scarcely more liberal line especially with regard to their own sanctuary of Newmarket. In the late 1870's the Jockey Club attempted, albeit with only partial success, to emasculate the unrecognised courses which had mushroomed around London at the time on the foundation of mass popular support (Vamplew 1976). Developments in the form of races at the turn of the century, however, vastly increased the spectator value of racing thus attracting the crowd in spite of the desire for exclusivity. Even the explosion of interest facilitated by the railways (Vamplew, 1976; Walvin, 1976) left racing still very much the sport of the upper classes (Longrigg, 1977).

The Turf in the nineteenth century was still blighted with blatant fraud and corruption and it is no accident that the Select Committee statement came at a time when the racing hierachy, well represented in the Upper House, was under explicit attack from vociferous middle class elements. There was more than a hint of simple ideology in the celebration of the coalescence of the highest and lowest orders in racing, notwithstanding their common interest in resisting middle class reform.

The crucial significance of the gentry for the development of racing has already been noted but there also seems to be plenty of evidence to support the view that racing was also of great importance, in turn, to the life of the gentry and to elite culture as a whole. This much might be expected in a society where the horse provided the main means of transport, but in any event Malcolmson (1974) suggests that in the eighteenth century racing was the favourite diversion of the gentry. Further it appears that even after

their eclipse from the control and national sponsorship of racing at a time when the rival diversions of hunting and shooting were becoming more attractive and organised, race meetings with the accompanying social activities, continued to attract the gentry in great numbers. If anything, the local race meetings became an even more important focus of sociability (Longrigg, 1977). In some ways this is not surprising because hunting in particular was only partly a rival activity; the shared interest in bloodstock, later the growth of steeplechase racing and the frequent coincidence of hunt balls and similar activities with the local races, made them often closely interdependent, at least socially.

A fleeting glimpse of the role of racing in gentry life can be gained from the biographies of individual families. Racing was a virtually permanent item on the social agenda of the middle income gentry family, the Lucy's of Charlecote in Warwickshire for example, though succeeding generations varied in the depth of their enthusiasm (Fairfax Lucy, 1958). The third Sir Thomas Lucy began the tradition in the seventeenth century and the household account of his descendant Dr. William Lucy, described as "ardent student of form in horses", show that in 1722 "quite a lot is spend on wine and lost at the races" (Fairfax Lucy, 1958, p.200). His succeeding nephew, George, forty-two years at Charlecote, apart from employing the services of Capability Brown in re-designing the gardens, was also something of a sportsman 'learnt at Oxford' and became Steward of Stratford races. In 1769 he was also appointed High Sherriff of the County though it is not clear which of the two he regarded as the most prestigious. The family's biographer notes that in the year the Garrick Shakespeare Jubilee took place:

> "The date of the rejoicing was arranged to coincide with Stratford Races of which George was Steward, where a Jubilee Plate worth 50 guineas was to be run for. It was unthinkable for a Lucy to miss a day's racing, but Mr. Garrick's public breakfast was tactfully timed for nine o'clock in the morning."
>
> (Fairfax Lucy, p.231)

Towards the turn of the century The Reverend John Hammond Lucy was responsible for beginning the collection of the Racing Callendar and saw his sons off "to Warwick and Stratford races with fond pride, recalling his own youth and paid up their losses afterwards". (p.250). One of these sons, George, rode in steeplechases and the author relates that after driving to Warwick races three times during the week, on 10th September 1824 his wife gave birth to their first child ... feeling a little tired! This association with racing was continued throughout the nineteenth century as this landed Victorian family continued to enjoy a very comfortable life-style.

The early history of the local race meeting at Warwick is also instructive.[12] The races appear to have been initiated as part of the attempt to lure the gentry and professional men back into the town after the fire of 1694. The new social order required fashionable entertainments prominent among which were the horse races on St. Mary's common. Under the patronage of the Earl of Warwick, Lord Brooke, regular racing was established. In the late eighteenth century the annual September meeting became the focus for a whole round of social activities among the gentry and townspeople, including balls, public breakfasts and so on. The first race stands were erected in 1809 and the number of meetings gradually increased and remained an important attraction, with the attendant social functions, throughout the nineteenth century. Warwick races earned the reputation of being characterised by large fields and good attendances and marked

popularity. However, it is important that the role of racing in this context be kept in perspective. Although there were a great many meetings even in the early eighteenth century - Plumb (1973) notes that in 1722, 112 towns and cities had meetings - these were often annual meetings.

If the gentry continued to provide the grass roots for racing in the country, from the late eighteenth century onwards it was the aristocracy who took the leading roles and appeared most prominently on the public stage of racing. By the late eighteenth century the exclusive meeting at Newmarket had extended to three months (Mingay, 1976) and had become the symbolic focal point of racing. Large racing outfits were being maintained by well-known members of the nobility including the Dukes of Bolton, Cumberland, Devonshire, Grafton, Northumberland and Queensbury and the Lords, Abingdon, Clermont, Egremont, Grosvenor, for example. The likes of those had established and continued to populate the Jockey Club whose jurisdiction over the sport grew relentlessly. Some indeed acquired estates near Newmarket in order to be in attendance during the Newmarket season as did for example, the Duke of Rutland with his estate at Cheveley (Thompson, 1971). Under the patronage of the aristocracy racing and breeding took on new economic proportions and the training industry with its attendant division of labour began to emerge as a full time acitivity. Thompson notes that it became hard for others to compete; in 1800 Lord Fitz-William spent £1,500 per annum on racing and £3,000 on his racing stables at Wentworth. Scarcely twenty years later Lord George Bentick had £300,000 settled on him for his racing and gambling purposes alone (Seth Smith, 1971)!

Vamplew (1976) suggests the expense factor as part of the reason for the exclusivity of racing despite its public image as a sport for all, though

this is a rather obvious consideration. The desire for exclusivity, of course, tends to seek out expensive pursuits. Nevertheless, as the author argues, ownership was for the very rich and "despite occasional prophecies of impending penury, the British aristocracy was, for the most part, wealthy". (1976, p.178). Hence Vamplew notes that in the 1830's a third of owners with registered colours were titled and sixty years later despite the influx of new wealth from lesser origins, the proportion was still one-eighth. Thus Bailey (1978) also notes that racing in the nineteenth century "remained a stronghold of aristocratic patronage and life-style". Vamplew argues that the high proportion of aristocratic owners encouraged the belief that ownership was an accompanyment of social position and wealth, a sign of arrival and upper class identity. Hence for many:

> "... patronage of local meetings was an obligation of their place in the social hierachy and participation at others a self-imposed requirement of society's social diary."
>
> (1976, p.178)

Considerable sanction was also given to aristocratic owners by the notoriety afforded some of their number in public positions of eminence. The fourteenth Earl of Derby, when Prime Minister, reputedly bored Disraeli to tears with his constant talk of horses when ensconsed at the Earl's seat at Knowsley.[13] A Jockey Club member, Derby is said to have never "allowed anything to interfere with his enthusiasm for the Turf and never missed an important meeting". (Margetson, 1980, p.100). The patronage of the Prince of Wales who was in large part responsible for transforming Royal Ascot into the social occasion, also helped to legitmate the participation of notables in the Turf though on the whole they needed little encouragement.

The sharing of the activity among important sections of upper class at

local and national levels contributed to the reaffirmation of common cultural identity and thus imparted its own help to integrative processes in class formation. Longrigg (1977) even suggests that the common interest in racing and other sports helped to mollify post-Restoration divisions in landed society though the division of labour in the control of racing, according to this author, equally symbolised the distinction between Whig and Tory interests in the country.

However, as a mode of class accommodation in the cultural sphere, racing probably reached maturity in the later nineteenth century. Aristocratic patronage and the associated considerations mentioned above, of course, provided an important motivation for those of new wealth but less exalted origins, to see racing as one among a number of means to gaining social acceptability. Vamplew is quite explicit about this process:

> "It was this belief that tempted new owners, successful men from industry and commerce, to come into racing, particularly in the late nineteenth century."
>
> (1976, p.178)

For these people, "... owning racehorses symbolised high society". (1976, p.178). Despite the tendency of the behaviour of the Prince of Wales to encourage this view, with his friendship with the bankers Rothschilds and others from the world of trade and industry (Margetson, 1980, Vamplew 1976), such acceptance was undoubtedly often more apparent than real. It was a good deal longer for example, before such men found their way into the Jockey Club enclave (Khan, 1980). As will become evident from the data to be presented shortly, the numbers of men involved from the elite positions of finance and industry was also relatively small and many of these were descended from the landed aristocracy anyway. The latter observation

supports the earlier contention that the accommodation process between the old and risinq elites was a two-way process. It would, nevertheless, be a mistake to underestimate the contribution of racing to that wider process of social emulation through leisure discussed earlier. In any event, the impact of the new owners on the economics of racing was considerable (Vamplew, 1976) and represented one more element in the development and re-shaping of racing in this country.

While aristocratically connected elements albeit now with wider interests than in land still controlled the orqanisation of racing, the first decades of the present century saw bourgeois owners make considerable inroads into the economic rewards available and the commercial organisation of breeding. This process had continued unabated durinq the rest of the century so that this group is now more adequately (but still under-represented) in the control and organisation of racing (Khan, 1980).

Nevertheless, to summarise, the above discussion has indicated that, historically, modern racing provided an important ingredient of elite sociability and of elite culture as a whole in this country. In the following discussion some attempt will be made to assess its continuing contribution to that milieu.

Elite Sociability and Racehorse Ownership

In assessing the continuing contribution of racing to elite culture two kinds of consideration may be seen as relevant. Firstly, one can look at the changes in the pattern of racehorse ownership which may have taken place in the present century. This exercise has been undertaken by Khan (1980) and the results of that study will be discussed shortly. However, this procedure is useful primarily in the assessment of the degree to which the world of

racing has been penetrated by non-traditional upper class elements and broadly speaking leaves aside the question of how significant racing as a pastime is to sections of the upper class. This second question is a very difficult one to answer, however, and there are no procedural methods which can be brought to bear on it which do not have severe limitations. Nevertheless, an investigation will be made of this issue, using empirical data on the reported pastimes of one small section of the upper class which one can broadly term the corporate economic elite. However, it is to the pattern of racehorse ownership that first reference can be made.

As Vamplew (1976) argues, despite the domination of the sport in the nineteenth century by landed and, additionally, new wealth, there was always room for the small owner at the margins of the sport. Small-scale entrepreneurs, publicans, shopkeepers and traders either singly or in partnerships, were always in evidence though few ever made any real impact in terms of prize money or plundering the prestigious races. The author suggests that in effect these owners formed a sort of reserve army of owners indulging their enthusiasm as and when they could afford it. This kind of marginal owner is a persisting phenomenon in racing though equally there is evidence of important changes in the overall structure of ownership.

Khan (1980) argues indeed that such changes have been a major factor inducing other important developments in the industry, especially in the nature of racehorse training, and constitute a pivotal dimension of the changing relationship between the sub-culture of racing and the wider culture.

Khan suggests that the later twentieth century evidences four new sources of racehorse ownership - the nouveaux riches, partnerships and

syndication, the overseas owner and company sponsorship. The latter three are relatively recent developments while the former is, of course, a continuation of trends noted earlier and could have only been considered novel in the late nineteenth century. Indeed, Khan shows that the notion of nouveaux riches replacing the traditional owner is firmly embedded in the perceptions of owners themselves and is a well worn theme in racing discourse. The large breeding and racing outfits are seen to have declined along with the predominant position of landed wealth to be replaced by the individually less extensive interests of the new breed of owner. The author's analysis of champion owners in the first decades of the century indicates the breaking of the stranglehold of the top few aristocratically connected owners, reflecting trends to a wider distribution of honours and a greater heterogeneity of owners. Khan suggests that available data on the re-distribution of wealth and income among the top 10-15% of the population in this country during the century also supports this observation. What evidence there is tends to support the arguments of the racing fraternity. However, though the proportion of titled owners has decreased they are still conspicuous.[14] The fear that this development would lead to a decline in the number of horses in training has proved groundless, in fact, the reverse has occurred.[15] As Khan argues, although racing and breeding is a very risky business with losses virtually guaranteed, for many wealthy people expenditure on racing may represent the lesser of several evils compared with death duties and other taxes for example. Hence there has been no shortage of recruits from the world of business to make up for the relative demise of the traditional owner.

Khan points out, however, that the terms 'traditional' and 'nouveaux riches' have to be treated with a degree of circumspection. In his sample of 400 owners in 1978, only 16% could be considered as representative of either

group and of these it was possible to identify more of the former than the latter. As Vamplew (1976) argues, a characteristic of the model of the nouveaux riches owner was that the social returns on investment in horse flesh were the primary consideration. Interestingly, reporting his data for the late 1970's Khan found that although 'social' reasons were an important motivation for ownership, financial considerations were also very important - however unrealistically, owners did not expect to lose money in racing automatically. Nevertheless, significantly when considering desirable changes in racing the most frequent items mentioned were matters of individual moment rather than with the overall organisation of racing: such matters, for example, as their treatment and acceptance by racecourse officials which of course reflects the permanent anxiety of the newcomer and outsider.

Changes in the rules of racing have made rapid growth in syndicated and company ownership possible in the last decade such that these forms of ownership now account for over a third of horses in training. Syndicated ownership is very fragmented, often amounting to no more than ownership by proxy and has been encouraged by movements in income distribution in the middle layers. Tax advantages have accrued to company ownership and have no doubt allowed many would-be owners in small and medium size companies to indulge their interests while off-setting the cost against company expenses. Although a long-standing phenomenon, the overseas owner has become more in evidence in recent years but is likely to prove a volatile source of ownership.

Khan's data also showed that 80% of owners were male, most commonly middle-aged and half of whom could point to some long-standing family interest in horses or racing. However, for current purposes perhaps the most interesting finding was that the most common occupational group among

owners was a financially based one, comprising company directors and chairmen, partners and brokers and so on. It appears in other words that at whatever level, the world of commerce, finance and industry provides the mainstay of the ownership population. When this is combined with the observations concerning the widening status base and increased heterogeneity, it is possible to conclude that the structure of ownership differs significantly from that at the turn of the century but at the same time the embryonic form of these developments was discernible then. Overall participation in the world of racehorse ownership though wider than at any time historically, is still restricted in the main to narrow sections of the population and to the upper and professional middle class in particular.

Sociability, Racing and the Economic Elite

Turning to the second of the two questions outlined above, the following discussion reports the findings of a study of the social background and leisure interests of a number of people who could be considered as prime candidates for the economic elite. In order to afford some very broad longitudinal comparison, populations were constructed for two widely separated points in time for which data was available, namely the years 1904 and 1976.

A note on the research procedure is appended to this chapter: however, the most salient observations may be mentioned here. The same qualifications for inclusion in the population were applied to both years. Hence the two cohorts consist of multiple directors and chairmen (managing directors in the absence of a chairman) of the top 200 industrial and 50 financial companies in the U.K. Many of these, of course, held both statuses but were counted only once. The sector of their involvement was also recorded from the available data, that is either industrial, financial or both. This procedure produced populations of 431 and 392 individuals for 1904 and 1976

respectively. In addition to the recording of the individual's sector and status from existing data, background information was collected on secondary and higher education, club membership, and leisure pursuits and pastimes for all members of the two populations. Principally these include racing, the traditional field sports - hunting, shooting and fishing (game fishing), golf and yachting. For this purpose a variety of the usual sources was used and these are listed more fully in the appendix. The sources for information on participation in racing included the Racing Calendar, Weatherby's computer records of current racehorse owners, Horses in Training, The Directory of the Turf, together with the more general sources.

The problems and limitations of these sources are well known and have been discussed in some detail by Bell (1974). Perhaps the most obvious limitation is their character as largely self-reporting sources of information. Wiener (1981) has also noted that the lower status of industry among the upper class in the late nineteenth century meant that fewer entries were made for businessmen in the Dictionary of National Biography, for example. Apart from the question of accuracy, the sources also allow such scope to respondents on the range of information to be provided that incompleteness is a perennial problem.This is especially the case the more one moves from the standard information such as education to items such as pastimes for example. The racing sources generally suffer from the same problems. Vamplew (1976) notes, for example, that many nineteenth century owners raced under pseudonyms and thus appear in the official records as other people. While this is not such a problem with modern official racing records, it was apparent from the research that a number of prominent figures in the sample generally failed to acknowledge their participation in racing which was indicated by the official records. Hence even the quasi-official Turf Directories failed to show up their involvement. Added to

this are the problems generated by the dimension of time. Sources of information have their own developmental logic and those which were in existence in 1904 for example, also tend to carry less information than their contemporary counterparts. Hence the 1904 data is much more incomplete than the 1976 data. For example, it was possible to derive some information for 90.1% of the 1976 sample whereas the corresponding figure for 1904 was 56.8% and while information on all variables was obtained for 71.2% of the 1976 sample, this was only possible for 19.3% of the 1904 sample.

Hence, overall, the evidence remains at an indicative level and generalisations can only be made with a good deal of caution. Nevertheless, it is possible to make some statements of trends which may add to the above discussion of the development of aspects of elite culture.

General Characteristics of the Two Cohorts of Elite Candidates

Before moving on to the more particular detail on pastimes some brief observations may be made on more general features of the two groups, especially in terms of sector (industrial/financial) and directorial status.

Table 2 Sector distribution among 1904 and 1976 samples

	1904	1976
	%	%
Sector		
Industrial	57.8	46.9
Financial	17.4	17.9
Both	24.8	35.2
	100.0	100.0
	n = 431	n = 392

Table 3 Status Distribution among 1904 and 1976 samples

	1904	1976
	%	%
Status		
Multiple director	49.9	46
Chairman and Mult.	19.7	19.6
Chairman only	30.4	30.1
Man. Dir. & Mult.	-	4.3
	100.0	100.0
	n = 431	n = 392

As may be seen from the above Tables, the two cohorts evidence a high degree of consistency over time in both variables but particularly in terms of status distribution. The most notable difference concerns the swing in the 1976 sample towards participation in both sectors at the expense of purely industrial participation. This evidence clearly supports the observation of many writers concerning the increasing inter-dependence, not to say fusion, of corporate industrial and financial interest. The pool of candidates for the economic elite in other words, has become more homogenous at least on the important dimension of sectoral allegiance.

Social Background Data

Other data on educational experience and associational links support this trend of homogenisation on other dimensions. However, it needs to be re-stated here that the incomplete nature of the 1904 data means that conclusions can only be regarded as provisional and tentative; thus statements concerning this data might be prefaced with the phrase 'at least'. Because of this incompleteness the search for correlations and significance testing

were kept to a minimum.

Table 4 Educational experience, 1904 and 1976 cohorts compared

	I			II	
	1904	1976		1904	1976
	%	%		%	%
School, etc.			Higher Education		
Eton/Harrow	17.6	20.7	Oxbridge	18.3	42.9
Other Public	31.8	46.4	Other University	5.8	11.7
Grammar/Tech.	-	15.6	R.M.C. etc.	0.9	1.0
Elementary/	0.9	1.8	Other	1.2	2.6
Other	0.9	3.6	NK	73.5	41.8
NK	48.7	11.9			
	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0
	n = 431	n = 392		n = 431	n = 392

The data on the educational experience of the corporate elite 'pool' suggests that exclusive schooling is at least as an important factor in 1976 as it was in 1904 and tends to confirm the findings of Fidler's (1981) study which indicated that 57% and 38% of his sample of the business elite attended respectively, Public School and Oxbridge.[16] The chances are that this exclusiveness has indeed intensified. This observation would tend to support that of Stanworth and Giddens (1974) concerning their analysis of company chairmen. As was suggested earlier, the more restrictively the economic elite is defined, the more definite is the trend of increasing exclusiveness in education and other practices. However, this is not to say simply that therefore nothing has changed since the turn of the century in this respect, for these institutions have also partially adapted to the needs of credentialism and technical competence. Hence a self-fulfilling prophecy has

worked to maintain these institutions in an elite position. The same kind of process has operated in relation to the position of the 'Gentleman's Club' which, in feeding off a a reputation for connections with success and high status, may have increased in popularity as a form of association. This is discussed in more detail below.

However, the data on education support previous research (Whitley, 1974; Fidler, 1981) on the relatively stronger association of the 'City' with the elite educational institutions (Eton/Harrow/'Oxbridge') than of these with 'Industry', a relationship which has remained relatively stable over time as may be seen from the Table below.

Table 5 Educational Experience of the sample directors in different business sectors 1904, 1976

	1904		1976	
	Eton/Harrow	Oxbridge	Eton/Harrow	Oxbridge
	%	%	%	%
Sector				
Industrial	14.1	14.5	10.3	33.2
Financial	24	28	31.4	54.3
Both	21.5	20.6	29.0	50.0

Such an association, however, appears increasingly pertinent for those with feet in both industrial and financial camps.

Although there was a predictably strong association between type of schooling and higher education, there was some evidence of increased openness at least in relation to Oxbridge entry. For example, whereas 68.4%

of the 1904 sample who attended Oxbridge were also ex-Eton or Harrow, the corresponding proportion for 1976 was 33.7%. Again this corresponds to processes extensively discussed earlier, corroborating the view that recruitment has widened somewhat but in the main only to include the offspring of upper middle class and professional groups.

The strongest measure of association in the data concerned the relationship between type of schooling and type of club to which an individual belonged. For example, in 1904 at least 42.7% of members of the prestigious London Clubs in the sample (n = 110) were ex-Eton or Harrow and 48% were ex-Oxbridge. The corresponding figures for 1976 (n = 114) were 48.2% and 67.5%. Of 85 members of the business elite on which information was available, Fidler (1981) found that 47% were members of the London Club circuit. Overall, it seems fair to suggest that club membership has become increasingly de rigeur for members and potential members of the corporate elite.

Table 6 Club Membership 1904 and 1976

	1904	1976
	%	%
Prestigious clubs	25.5	29.1
Other London clubs	22.2	37.2
Foreign	0.9	4.3
NK/none	51.3	29.4
	n = 431	n = 392

This trend becomes somewhat clearer when total club membership is examined in terms of sectoral distribution.

Table 7 Distribution of Club Membership in different business sectors 1904, 1976

	Total Club Membership	
	1904	1976
	%	%
Sector		
Industrial	44.6	59.3
Financial	49.3	75.8
Both	54.2	71

Again, involvement in the financial or in both financial and industrial worlds is more likely to 'require' Club membership of some sort than involvement in simply the industrial sphere. The overall pattern also appears more accentuated for the latter date although the greater completeness of the 1976 data could alone account for this. Although the association is weak an individual's directorial status has some bearing on the propensity to club membership. For example, predictably Chairmen-Multiple directors were more prone to membership at both times than Multiple Directors only or Chairman only.

Table 8 Status and Club Membership (including prestigious and other clubs)

	Club membership			
	1904		1976	
	%		%	
Status				
Chairmen-Multiple Directors	62.3	n = 85	80.5	n = 77
Chairmen only	45.8	n = 131	67.6	n = 118
Multiples only	43.2	n = 215	66.1	n = 179
Multiple - Man.Dir.	-	-	67	n = 17
		431		392

The theoretical significance or otherwise of club membership was discussed earlier in this chapter but the finding that this relatively exclusive institution continues to be a popular adjunct to exalted economic status remains an important finding.

Pastimes

The data on pastimes and recreations is naturally more incomplete than that on the major indices of social background with the exception, that is, of information on participation in racing. The early, highly developed commercialisation and bureaucratic organisation of racing has meant that records of some sort have been kept for a considerable period of time. No one source, however, is sufficient but a reasonably accurate picture of participation in racing (i.e. ownership or high level administration) may be gleaned from the variety of sources listed earlier. The racing data is thus 'more or less' complete and does not depend solely on self reporting; the other data is 'less' complete and is for the most part self-reported.

An overview of types of pastimes and their relative popularity may be derived from the Table below. Following a pilot survey only a selected number of pastimes were individually recorded. Other thinly scattered activities which ranged from philately to antique collection, from walking to gardening and squash rackets, for example, were recorded as 'other pastimes' or 'other sports'. The other limitations of this procedure have already been discussed.

Table 9 Pastimes. Approximate participation rates among the Corporate Elite

	1904	1976
	%	%
Sport/Pastime		
Golf	4.2	19.6
Racing	4.6	10.3
Shooting	8.2.	14.8
Hunting	2.6	8.9
Fishing	3.1	14.0
Yachting	2.6	8.9
Other (All other sports & pastimes)	8.1	13.3
NK	66.6	10.2
	n = 431	n = 392

(As each individual could acknowledge more than one pastime the figures represent participation for each activity, hence the columns do not add up to 100%).

With the possible exception of racing, the time series differences are accounted for by the sparcity of information for the 1904 sample. In both cases, however, the figures represent minimum rates (leaving aside the question of the meaning of the figures) therefore the effective cohort sizes are much lower though for the sake of consistency the proportions are

calculated on the basis of total sample size.

By far the most popular sporting activity contemporarily is golf, occuping almost 20% of the corporate elite pool in 1976. Hence one can initially appreciate the observation of Berkeley-Thomas (1978) on the potential importance of the nineteenth hole in business communication. Racing on the whole appears on a par with the traditional field sports of which shooting has clearly remained an important outlet for upper class recreation. Indeed, if anything, the relatively exclusive habits of racing and shooting have become more popular among the leaders of the corporate business community, a development which is broadly in line with those vis-a-vis education and club membership. However, similar relative increases also occurred in the other activities, hence one cannot discount here the possible influence of the incompleteness of the 1904 data.

The importance of fishing is difficult to assess because it was not possible to distinguish game fishing with its connotations of exclusiveness from common or garden course fishing. The former would have been of more relevance than the latter. Hunting and yachting are recognisably supported but seem to be more specialist pursuits.

A similar pattern of results was obtained by Fidler (1981) and may be briefly mentioned though they are not directly comparable. In particular, they represent adjusted percentages based on a total of 83 out of 130 individuals on which data was available, whereas it was considered more consistent in the present study to remain with raw percentages. Hence the figures reported by Fidler are somewhat higher than those reported above. Nevertheless, golf also emerges in his study as the most popular recreation (29%), and while participation in other activities is of a broadly similar

order, allowing for the adjusted percentage mentioned earlier, strictly speaking the similarities end there. In particular, the traditional field sports figure less prominently in the Fidler study where hunting, for example, does not appear at all. Rather more surprising in view of findings reported here, is that no mention at all is made of horse-racing. One could speculate ad nauseam on the reasons for these differences but there are sufficient differences in sampling and information gathering procedure alone to account for most of them. It has already been suggested indeed that the conventional bibliographical sources are not especially productive in throwing up participants in horse-racing, and one thus has to look farther afield. However, this merely highlights the truth that the adequacy of sources reflects the selectivity of the researcher. Apart from this discrepancy, however, it should be re-emphasised that the differences in the two sets of data are not great by any means.

When the recreations in the present study are cross-tabulated with other variables such as sector, status, education and club membership, no significantly abnormal distributions appear. However, it is useful to look at racing participation in these terms. It might have been hypothesised from Rubinstein's (1974) contention that the financial and London based commercial bourgeoisie were the first 'new rich' group to be accommodated by the traditional upper class, that financially based members of the sample would show a greater propensity to racing involvement.

Despite the instance of such well-known cases as the Rothschild's, this contention is not strongly supported by the data. Although slightly more 'financials' were so involved in 1904, this advantage had certainly evaporated by 1976. In 1904 5.3% of 'financials' were owners compared with 10% in 1976, whereas the comparable figures for 'industrials' was 4.8% in 1904 but

10.3% in 1976. However, in 1904 60% of the owners in the sample were 'industrials', 20% were 'financials' and a further 20% were both; in 1976 the respective proportions were 50%, 18.4% and 31.6%. The relative position of the 'financial' owners had thus declined but again the figures reflect the greater preponderance of industrial-financial directors in 1976 over 1904.

Table 10 Sectoral distribution of Ownership 1904, 1976

	Sector					
	Industrial		Financial		Both	
	% of as owners	% of all owners	% of as owners	% of all owners	% of as owners	% of all owners
1904	4.8	60	5.3	20	3.7	20
1976	10.8	50	10	18.4	8.7	31.6

Distributions in terms of status were also insignificant statistically but both cohorts evidenced a slight tendency for 'chairmen only' to be more involved in racing.

Table 11 Directorial Status and Ownership

Status	Multiple		Ch'man-Mult.		Ch'men only		Man.Dir.-Mult.	
	of as owners	% of all owners	of as owners	% of all owners	of as owners	% of all owners	of as owners	% of all owners
1904	3.3	35	3.5	15	7.6	50	0.0	0.0
n =	(215)	(20)	(85)	(20)	(131)	(20)	(0.0)	(0.0)
1976	6.7	31.6	13.0	26.3	13.6	42.1	0.0	0.0
n =	(180)	(40)	(77)	(40)	(118)	(40)	(17)	(0.0)

Educational experience is also not strongly associated with ownership. However, in 1904, 70% of the owners were ex-public school compared with 58.1% in 1976 but given the likelihood that the vast majority would have attended public school for lack of alternatives, this comparison is somewhat artificial. In 1904 20% of owners in the sample were ex-Eton/Harrow and 50% from other public schools; in 1976 the respective figures were 31.6% and 42.1%. Oscar Wilde's observation concerning the association between the playing fields of Eton and national military prowess may now be an anachronism but the institutions's propensity for producing leading 'Turfite's' including a large proportion of Jockey Club members (Khan, 1980) continues unabated. Further, whereas in 1904 at least 39% of owners in the sample had attended Oxbridge, in 1976 50% had done so. However, this reflects the overall increased importance of Oxbridge attendance for the later sample.

There is also very little overlap between racing and other activities with the possible exception of hunting (where in any case the numbers are very small) and shooting. The association of racing and hunting in the nineteenth century commented upon in the previous section is to some extent reflected in the fact that in the 1904 sample 20% of owners were also huntsmen and nearly half (44.4%) of the huntsmen were also owners. In 1976, however, these proportions had declined to 5.3% and 35% respectively. In terms of shooting the trend such as it is, is reversed, a quarter of owners in 1976 were also 'shooters' compared with 5% 70 years earlier; 16.9% of 'shooters' were owners in 1976 compared with 4% in the earlier sample.

Discussion and Conclusions

The fact that 10% of a narrowly defined, strategic segment of the upper class such as the corporate economic elite, actively share a leisure time interest in horse-racing, which involves considerable expense and which is dominated by wealthy people may be seen as significant. However, it is clear from the other data that it would be a mistake to ascribe to racing a central place in the pattern of sociability of this section of the upper class or of the upper class as a whole. Equally it is clear that racehorse ownership, a rather strict measure of interest in the activity, remains one of three or four activities which, in their relative popularity, may be said to be characteristically upper class pastimes.

The meaning of the popularity of golf is difficult to assess. As Berkeley-Thomas implicitly suggests, many a business deal has undoubtedly been cobbled together in the solicitude of the golf course, but it is essentially a locally based pastime. There is indeed a definite hierarchy of prestigious Golf Clubs which provide plenty of scope for status display and mutual congratulation but it seems likely that such sociability is liable to be more important at the local business community level; the same is probably true of hunting but clearly more contemporary research is desirable on these two areas. Racing and shooting, on the other hand, appear to require less parochial forms of involvement, though it would be a mistake to accentuate differences in the social dimensions of these pursuits.

With developments in communication and broader technological horizons, the twentieth century has witnessed a great expansion in the possibilities for forms of leisure and greater variability in the ways of filling in the space of sociability. Despite this and the general trend towards individuation in modern society, these few activities show a remarkable resilience in their

continued ability to attract followers from the upper reaches of society. There appears in other words to be a good deal of continuity in some elements of upper class culture if the evidence relating to the social group examined above is at all indicative. This is not to suggest, however, that the intrinsic character of activities such as racing, shooting and hunting and so on, have remained unaltered. Nevertheless, sufficient remains of their original character as pleasurable pastimes in status enhancing contexts for them to remain attractive to recognisable numbers of the contemporary British upper class.

Racing, in particular, appears historically, to have been a vibrant element of upper class culture and while it is now a less central and more specialised pursuit, there is some evidence of continuity with its earlier status. Racing continues to be recognised as a milieu in which like individuals may socialise on the implicit understanding that the segmented nature of the horse-racing world will provide for both exclusivity and the opportunity for status display. It also continues to provide a conspicuous social location in which status striving among wealthy individuals may be indulged through social emulation. Horse-racing does provide a resource for elite culture, if this is now more circumscribed by other activities and possibilities.

Much of this would find support in Martin Wiener's(11) remarkable study of the development of elite culture in Britain since the mid-nineteenth century. Wiener arques that the unique pattern of modernisation and industrialisation in Britain, heavily circumscribed as it was by the existence of a landed, capitalist elite spawned an elite culture, a curious mixture of old and new, which eventually stunted a thoroughgoing bourgeois industrial spirit. Wiener's view that this anti-industrialist culture is a major factor in

the decline of the British economy is overdrawn but the characterisation of the emergent elite culture is consistent with the arguments of this chapter. Wiener suggests that the emergent bourgeois values associated with the industrial revolution were, by mid-century, confronted by a renewed culture of gentility. This had its roots in the culture of the landed aristocracy and upper gentry but was soon amplified into an illusory, atavistic reification of a traditional social structure characterised by the values of pastoral rusticity. Bourgeois values of individual striving, progress, scientism and so on were never completely swamped but from the late nineteenth century elite culture took a distinctly anti-industrial line, one reflected in literature, architecture and political rhetoric, for example.

This gentrification of bourgeois values thus produced a culture which focused on the past and a view of England which equated it with the 'country'. In common with many other writers, Wiener fails to discuss the role of sociability explicitly but it is clear that this cultural milieu would have given renewed sanction to leisure pursuits typically associated with the country. The development of various processes of social control and social closure before and during the nineteenth century meant inevitably that those pursuits were also those typically dominated by the landed upper class, such as hunting, shooting and racing.

The process of absorption of bourgeois industrial interests into this elite culture also meant that in addition to acquiring land and estates, wealthy entrepreneurs and industrialists were also naturally drawn to the pastimes of the country and the gentry and thus, for example, towards racing, even though by the late nineteenth century racing had acquired a distinctly urban connection. It was thus the place of racing in a general nexus of gentrified elite culture which attracted aspirants to and members of the upper class.

While considerably mollified, the symbolic legacy of that culture is far from played out.

It is appropriate at this point to return to the complex problem of upper class structuration with which this chapter began and to make some indicative observations. It would seem that there are four kinds of processes which contribute to the reproduction of the corporate and social elites within the British upper class. First there are two groups of what might be termed 'core' processes. The first of these include to some extent the interchangeable elements of:

1. upbringing in the world of the upper class rooted in property with connections in the corporate business world and wider upper class;
2. experience of elite education at either secondary or higher levels (particularly the latter - this allows non-upper-class candidates to join the pool);
3. academic or technical credentials and qualifications and proven competence in a relevant sphere of activity (this ensures that those of upper-class origins with the right qualities go forward).

Second, there are inter-institutional linkages. These include intercorporate linkages which are structured by the logic of the corporate enterprise. Frequently, these connect with prominent organisations in other institutional spheres.

In addition to these two essential processes there are thirdly, a number of attributes which are useful and characteristic of elite membership, but in themselves are neither necessary nor sufficient. Among the most important of these are:

1. involvement in the primary locus of association, the Club circuit;
2. substantial property holdings;

3. family connections, intermarriage.

Fourthly, and least importantly, are a number of processes which provide external badges of membership and upper-class identity. This level is thus concerned with signification and is constituted by public involvement in a number of elite or elitist cultural practices ranging from a variety of fairly distinctive sociable and recreational pursuits to, for example, membership of the leading positions of cultural institutions, advisory bodies and the like.

If these processes can be visualised in terms of a series of concentric circles with the core processes occupying the centre, it is clear that the relevance to class structuration of sociability and cultural activities in the widest sense is the least central. Nevertheless, these practices, including the activity of racehorse ownership provide important ingredients to the particular and unique character of the total picture of the class structure. They represent the tinge flourishes rather than the foundation colours, but without them the image would be something else.

The social significance of an activity such as racing in this context then is limited, but not to be dismissed. While by no means closed, the racing world comprises a sufficiently exclusive enclave to attract upper class members as a medium of sociability and recreation. It is a context where statuses and identity as part of the upper class may be displayed and mutually confirmed - a process symbolically supported by the stratification of the racecourse and the racing business itself of which more will be said later. Racing in other words provides one of a number of alternative identity badges which enable certain sections of the upper class to recognise themselves and each other and re-confirm their status. In addition, it provides business luminaries with one of a number of contexts in which

interaction may take place with other sections of the upper class and ideologies and definitions shared and confirmed. However, the extent of participation makes it unlikely that either racing or other recreations represent a significant channel of communication of the sort which would function to integrate an economic or social elite.

Appendix

The sampling frames for this study were made available from an SSRC funded research project on the British upper-class directed by Dr. John Scott of the University of Leicester. The frames included all the names of directors of the leading two hundred public and private companies and the top fifty financial companies in the U.K. In addition, the frames included information on the status (chairman, managing director, etc.) and the sector of the individual's interest(s) (industrial, financial, etc.). The lists were arranged alphabetically, making it easy to select the required samples comprising multiple directors in the respective sets of companies for 1904 and 1976. It should be stressed here again that the responsibility for the derivation of the samples and the subsequent analysis lies solely with the author.

Data on the background variables mentioned in the text was recorded in pre-coded categories and was obtained from the following sources: "Who's Who 1974-80"; "Who was Who 1898-1950"; Burke's Peerage 1900-1910, 1975-1980"; Who's Who in Finance 1975"; "Business Who's Who 1976"; Burke's Landed Gentry 1904; 1976"; The Racing Calender 1904, 1976; Register of Owners 1980 (Weatherby's), The Directory of the Turf 1976, 1978, 1980, Horses in Training, 1904, 1976; Ruff's Guide to the Turf 1904, 1976.

Notes

1. The concept of power, real or otherwise, of course, has posed trenchant problems of analysis (c.f. Lukes, 1974) but insofar as this problem is germane to the question of the mediation of control, it is not of direct concern in this chapter.

2. This point has been appreciated by Fidler (1981) in his study of the British business elite which concentrates on organisations in the 'commanding heights' of the economy.

3. In his recent short review of the field for example, Useem (1980) cites almost three hundred references.

4. Failing to make this distinction, Fidler (1981) argues that the significance of interlocks has been exaggerated and that the pervasiveness of contacts between elite business and state personnel may be explained by the density of business as a source of interest group pressure in addition to the fact that increased state involvement in the economy has meant that the state requires such contacts for information, expertise and so on. Such contacts are viewed as legitimate and are actively sought. There is a good deal of truth in this but the significance of interlocks is rarely advanced simply in terms of their role in the mediation of control in the sphere of politics. They also perform important economic functions for business enterprises (Pennings, 1981).

5. This is the analytical journey implied by Miliband's (1969) celebrated study for example.

6. Rubinstein, (1981, p.1) has noted that the capacity of British ruling elites of accommodate new members from outside its own ranks dates well back to the Middle Ages.

7. Margetson (1980) notes for examples that:

> "It was thought that the accursed revolution of railroads would put an end to fox-hunting in England. Throughout the countryside in the 1840's, loud voices were raised in protest against 'the most oppressive monopoly ever to be inflicted upon a free country and the growth of a monster which will rend the vitals of those by whom it is fostered'. The best hunting country it was assumed, would be cut up into one vast gridiron, while the noise, the stench, the pollution of the railway engines would frighten the horses out of their wits and poison the air they breathed."
>
> (p.173)

8. This point is discussed more fully in Chapter Three.

9. These are provided by Itzkowitz (1977) and Carr (1976). Both cover very similar ground, though the discussion of Itzkowitz is closer to the concern here and the remarks in the text draw heavily on this account.

10. While he does not examine recreational activities, Wiener (1981)

examines in great detail the emergence of the equation of 'englishness' and the 'country" in his study of gentrification of bourgeois culture in the middle and late nineteenth century.

11. This is the important book by Vamplew (1976), **The Turf, a Social and Economic History of Horse Racing.**

12. This account is based on descriptions contained in the Victoria Country History of Warwick.

13. Disraeli, however, was, quietly, well-versed in racing affairs and was used to the preoccupation of fellow ministers with this distraction. It was he, in conversation with Lord George Bentinck some years earlier, who coined the phrase, 'the Blue Riband of the Turf', to describe the Epsom Derby.

14. Contemporarily, it is also the case that new concentrations have emerged comprising racing and breeding syndicates with roots in the world of high finance. Hence the trends noted by Khan are by no means unambiguously democratic. See Chapter Four.

15. See Chapter Four.

16. The present empirical study was completed before the publication of Fidler's (1981) study which also offers information on some of the variables discussed here. Fidler's sample comprised 130, somewhat haphazardly chosen, chief executives and others in leading British corporations in 1974/5. While direct comparisons are difficult because of procedural differences, where appropriate, contrasts are drawn with data in his informative study.

CHAPTER THREE

GAMBLING, WORKING CLASS CULTURE AND RACING

Introduction

The preceding discussion of racing and elite culture located the significance of racing in that context primarily in terms of sociability, display and social emulation for elite and upper class groups and aspirants to that status. The intrinsic and sociable dimensions are therefore seen to be pre-eminent in this milieu. It would, however, be inaccurate to discount the role of racing as a medium for betting among upper class groups. As was observed, such a preoccupation was particularly rampant at the turn of the nineteenth century and although it later became more subdued and implicit, the interest in gambling has remained a strong undercurrent in upper class attachment to the sport. Indeed, the symbiotic relationship between racing and betting has been noted by many writers and was perhaps most clearly expressed by the leading 'Turf' politician of the second half of the nineteenth century, Admiral Rous, when he commented with remarkable candour, 'Stop gambling and the whole game is up' (Mortimer, 1958). The emphasis on sociability and racing is therefore subject to this important qualification.

In contrast, however, the relationship between racing and working-class culture is, roughly speaking, reversed. Here the gambling elements may be suggested as pre-eminent with aspects of sociability and intrinsic attractions of secondary importance. However, a qualification is needed here also for it will be evident that the 'races' in the modern form have customarily provided periodic opportunities for sociability and recreation in popular and working-class culture. Historically, the races were an integral part of local

holidays, fairs and fetes and more recently, a focus of the 'day out' (Delgado, 1977). Nevertheless, there is considerable evidence to support the view that working-class engagement with racing was and is primarily mediated by betting activity. This evidence will be sifted during the course of the discussion.

The aim of the chapter then will be to explore and explain the conundrum of horserace gambling and the working class. This exercise will be undertaken through a number of analytical stages. These will involve a review of theories of gambling behaviour and an examination of the betting tradition within the working class and the role of racing in providing a medium for that tradition. The discussion will begin by considering the definition of gambling in order to establish the importance of isolating, analytically, the features of different forms of gambling. Gambling is assumed, therefore, not to be a simple, homogenous phenomenon. From this it will be possible to construct a typology of gambling forms, each with a distinctive pattern of characteristics. The articulation of these with the features of horse-racing will then be explored. The principal approaches to explaining gambling behaviour will then be discussed briefly in order to generate a provisional understanding of gambling. This step will show the need for an appreciation of the features of the forms of gambling previously outlined and lead to the methodological conclusion that an historical emphasis is essential to any theory of gambling and therefore to an exploration of the role of gambling in working class culture. Attention will be given to the problematic nature of this concept and to the available empirical material on popular recreation and leisure in the nineteenth century. In this context it will also be necessary to examine the social control of gambling in this period which reflected the common perception of the widespread nature and corrupting effects of gambling behaviour among the working class.

Historically, horserace betting may be seen as exhibiting characteristics entirely congruent with the ways of life of, and thus attractive to, the urban working class of mid-nineteenth Britain. This conjuncture initiated a long association between the working class and horserace betting, surviving in modified forms to the present day. The likelihood of continued participation and hence the persistence of exposure and allegiance (albeit problematic) to the value pattern embodied in racing will be discussed in the light of competing demands and attractions and the effects of changes in the political economy of racing.

Gambling: the issue of definition

In academic discussions of gambling it is de rigeur to begin by offering a definition of gambling. Newman (1972), for example, begins his informative study with the statement that "It is advisable to start with a definition". A similar assumption is evidently made by many writers, including Eadington (1976), Herman (1976a) and Devereux (1968) who, respectively, define gambling as:

> "the staking of something of value on the outcome of an uncertain contingency". (Eadington, 1976, p. 5):
>
> or "the betting or staking of something of value, with consciousness of risk and hope of gain, on the outcome of a game". (Herman, 1976a, p. 6);
>
> or "a form of activity in which the parties involved, who are known as bettors or players, voluntarily engage to make the transfer of money or something else of value among themselves contingent upon the outcome of some future and uncertain event". (Devereux, 1968, p. 55).

This common strategy is helpful insofar as it broadly indicates the kind of activity under discussion but these definitions tend to foreclose discussion of what are, in fact, difficult conceptual issues. Unless such definitions are

regarded as essentially provisional, they may obscure more than they illuminate. In particular, there may be a tendency to view gambling as an homogenous phenomenon and thus to rather global forms of explanation. Any understanding of gambling must differentiate between gambling forms and explore the distintinctive characteristic of different forms for an appreciation of the space each provides for different kinds of rewards.

Beyond this important consideration, the search for a final definition is unnecessary for present concerns. However, it will be instructive at this stage to note briefly the factors which have mediated definitions of gambling. Firstly, any number of observers have noted the penetration of value presuppositions into definitions and analyses.[1] It need hardly be said that this 'ethical point of view' is overwhelmingly negative (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 1977). It is also one common to moral entrepreneurs, politicians, and to many social scientists.[2] As Herman (1976) argues, there is a tendency among social scientists to describe gambling in terms of 'put down metaphors'.[3] Secondly, it is clear that the labelling and meaning of gambling and its perceived relationship with other riskly economic activities has varied historically (Downes, 1976; Fuller, 1977).[4] Thirdly, as was intimated earlier, theoretical presuppositions have, predictably, also mediated the issue of definition. Nowhere is this more evident than in Goffman's (1972) celebrated analysis of gambling as a sub-type of 'action'. This analysis of the increasingly rare phenomenon of action in terms of its features of 'fatefulness', 'consequentiality', 'problematicalness' and so on, epitomised in gambling, and the relationship of these to the processes of self-establishment and social integration implicitly unites a theory and definition of gambling. However, the interactionist emphasis of the argument inevitably tends to discount the instrumental/economic dimensions of gambling in favour of its expressive aspects.[5]

Goffman's analysis is useful, however, in distinguishing recreational gambling from other forms of action such as 'character contests' and 'practical gambles' which are also overlaid with gambling terminology.[6] From his arguments, it is also possible to deduce some essential features of recreational gambling: that it is an inter-subjective, consciously addressed, public activity with an explictly or implicitly agreed framework of rules, involving uncertainly, risk and consequentiality.[7] Goffman also argues that the nature of gambling action is that it is condensed, intense and concentrated, with a number of stages to the 'play':

1. squaring off or bet making;
2. the determination phase - whence the outcome of the play is produced;
3. the relevatory phase - when the result is made known to the players;
4. the settlement phase - completing the transaction on the basis of the result.

The distinctive feature of the gamble is that once 'squared up' the "outcome is determined and pay-off awarded all in the same breadth of experience. A single sharp focus of awareness is sustained at high pitch during the full span of the play". (Goffman, 1972, p. 156).

Acute though they are, this and other observations are based in the main on extrapolations from gaming and in particular, the author's familiarity with the Las Vegas gaming tables. Thus, despite Goffman's penchant for fine analytical distinctions, gambling is presented as an homogenous phenomenon. Nevertheless, the analysis of gambling action implicitly points to some possible differentiating factors between forms of gambling such as the intensity of the action, the pay-out interval, the method of determination and the rate of play, for example. The assumption here is that people do

not gamble in the abstract but in terms of specific activities. An appreciation of the characteristics of different gambling activities is a necessary basis for the clarification of motives.

The Features of Gambling Forms

It is possible to distill from the literature, particularly the work of Goffman (1972), Weinstein and Deitch (1974) and Cornish (1978), five characteristics which may help to differentiate between different forms of gambling.[8] These will be outlined briefly and then discussed with respect to horserace gambling. First, there is the frequency of opportunities to gamble. This also has been referred to as the 'speed of the action' or the 'rate of play'. This factor is directly related to the logistical properties of the activity on which the gamble is dependent. British football pools, for example, are dependent on weekly football games and the administrative logic of managing the exercise. Considerable and consistent variation exists among different forms on this dimension although within certain limits it may be subject to some manipulation.[9]

Second, and closely connected with the first variable is the pay-out interval, that is the time elapsing between determination and settlement. This depends on a number of factors including the logistical features and social organisation of the activity. For example, in forms which do not require the presence of the player (in horserace betting vis-a-vis roulette, for example) and where gambling is also illegal, payment intervals may be long and the rate of action slow, as it was in the system of illegal street betting in this country, for example (Cornish, 1978). Rapid pay-outs which influence the extent to which winnings can be re-bet (and lost), are particularly conducive to high action.

Third, gambling forms may vary in terms of the range of odds and stakes which are possible. This potentially allows for the development of different staking strategies and preferences. The wider the range of possibilities, the wider the likely range of attractions of a given form.[10]

Fourth, there is the relationship between the probability of winning an individual bet and the pay-out ratio. The probability of winning and the given odds are rarely the same. In commercial gambling the probabilities of winning will be longer than those reflected in given odds; the difference defining the notion of actuarial risk. It would, however, be impossibly complex to establish typical levels of actuarial risk for different forms[11] and a more practicable rule of thumb which might substitute for this factor in providing an idea of the 'riskiness' (understood in everyday terms) of different activities, is the typical percentage take-out per play by the operator. Overall, this does appear to vary fairly consistently between different forms. In horserace betting this is estimated to be around 20%, around 60% for football pools and 2%-3% in roulette for example.

Finally, it seems sensible to identify the degree of empirical indeterminacy involved in the outcome of events.[12] These can range from completely chance outcomes to those with a substantial degree of empirical determinacy in which outcomes are to some extent susceptible to calculation and informed estimates.[13] Guaging precisely how much empirical as opposed to chance uncertainty is in practice very problematic and judgments are liable to veer towards the intuitive. Nevertheless, this remains a real difference between gambling forms.

Typology of Gambling Forms

Intrinsic Characteristics

Gambling Medium	Rate of Action	Mode of Determination	Take-Out	Range of Staking Strategies, etc.	Pay-O Interv
Betting	Moderate	Empirical & Chance	Moderate	Moderate	Short
Horses	"	"	"	High	"
Dogs	"	"	"	High	"
Contests					
Gaming	High	Pure Chance	Low	Moderate	Immed
Roulette	"	"	"	"	"
Craps	"	"	"	Low	"
Slots	"	"	Moderate	"	"
Bingo					
Blackjack	"	"	"	"	"
Lotteries	Low	Pure Chance	High	Low	Long
Pools	"	High Chance	"	"	"
State Lotteries	"	Pure Chance	"	"	"
Premium Bonds	"	"	"	"	"

The difference in combination of these various features may be seen to give forms of gambling their distinctive characteristics. Different mixes and variations on these themes provide a range of potential experiences and attractions in both instrumental and expressive terms. The question of why subjects participate in one form as opposed to another will be taken up in due course but the discussion thus far is sufficient to offer a provisional understanding of the potential attractions of different activities.

Before applying these considerations to horserace betting it will be useful to construct a working typology of different gambling activities in terms of the above discussion. In so doing, it is important that the model also makes sense of conventionally drawn differences, for example, between betting, gaming and lotteries.

There are bound to be anomalies and ambiguities in a model such as this; nevertheless, it is apparent that the conventional distinction makes some sense in terms of the articulation of these different features and that reasonably consistent differences between the three major forms are identifiable. Generally speaking, betting in contrast with gaming evidences slower rates of action, a greater role of empirical indeterminacy, broadly comparable though somewhat greater riskiness, greater ranges of staking strategies and somewhat longer pay-out intervals.

The features of horserace betting reflect these general properties with its own peculiarities reflecting variations on the theme. For the bulk of the period since horserace betting has been available, legally or illegally, to a mass public, rates of action for reasons mentioned above were relatively low. It is true that for the contemporary betting office aficinado, the sequencing

of events and quick pay-outs, action can be more or less continuous. However, in the normal course of events such betting offers low rates of action, that is, a positive orientation would be needed to achieve heavy action in this form of gambling. Typically then, horserace betting might prove attractive to those predisposed to gamble but with limited resources in time and money. The pay-out interval also means that decisions to re-bet rather than retain winnings need not be dominated by the ambience and logic of the betting milieu, though in practice this may indeed be the case for a minority of betting shop habituees. In fact Downes et al (1976) report that among betting shop punters (where 80% of business is conducted on horse-racing) larger winnings tend to be retained and only smaller wins re-bet.

The odds structure and pay-out ratio in horserace betting is such that wins can be frequent and conspicuous and among certain classes of bets the chances of large pay-out are not so remote as to be meaningless. It is possible to retain hope in other words, without losing a purchase on reality. In this sense horserace betting of this kind is of this world in a way in which a win on the football pools is not.

Horserace betting is extremely uncertain, but as with other forms of betting, the uncertainty is to some extent empirically determined. Some elements of the determination process are in principle knowable, if very elusive. The actual running of an horserace is subject to chance occurrences but equally some information of a reasonably reliable kind is available on the relative abilities of the contestants. Less is available about the strategies of the human actors involved (Scott, 1968), but the fact that some purposive behaviour is entailed renders some calculation as to the likely turn of events possible. Horserace betting in other words provides the opportunity for the

exercise of observational, cognitive and social skills and knowledge. Further, it does so in a way in which betters deploying these or other 'heuristic strategies' are liable to not infrequent reinforcement.

This form of betting then may be seen as providing the space for a number of attractions: wide ranges of betting strategies, a time and a stake structure compatible with a number of life patterns, the possibility of vicarious participation and exercise of intellectual skills and so on. It should be clear, however, that this does not imply that people will interpret and respond to the possibilities in a pre-determined fashion, a view which would make unwarranted assumptions about the subjective rationality of bettors (Oldman, 1974).[14] Nevertheless, it seems likely that different subjective responses will be more or less difficult to sustain according to the structure of the activity in question. Different forms of gambling may provide more or less space for the maintenance of certain kinds of subjective experience. This will be important for a consideration of the historical engagement of the working class in horserace betting where it may be argued that the nature of horse-racing provided a range of features which were both compatible with elements of working class life and traditions of popular recreation which could be readily exploited by promoters. It is not assumed, as will be evident from the foregoing discussion, that the nature of this form of gambling has undergone no changes since the nineteenth century. However, it has displayed a certain continuity in terms of its basic features. In order to proceed to the historical dimension, it is first necessary to explore approaches to explaining gambling. A critical review of these will both indicate the need for such a dimension and the differentiating exercise previously undertaken.

Explaining Gambling

As Cornish (1978) perceptively notes, the supposition that at root gambling involves both the staking of money and an engagement with risk and uncertainty indicates that economic-instrumental and subjective-expressive considerations are inextricably implicated in its motivational logic. However, one of the curious aspects of sociological approaches to gambling - and psychological ones for that matter - is the overwhelming emphasis on the expressive dimension. Whereas commonsense appreciation of gambling tends to stress the (irrational) financial motivation of gambling, common sociological sense tends almost as a reflex reaction to stress its expressive rationality. It is as if the fact that gamblers on the whole and in the long run lose, that it is structurally impossible for the collective punter to beat the collective bookmaker, were sufficient reason to render all consideration of financial logic redundant.

This conclusion is at best premature for it seems altogether unlikely that people should be attracted initially to gambling activities by anything other than the possibility of material gain which is its most overt even if not its most dominant feature. The recognition of other possible satisfactions would seem to require at least some preliminary exposure to or anticipatory socialisation into, the activity. However, it is necessary to guard against a reversion to a simplistic economic explanation. Two considerations are relevant here. The fact that the dominant language of gambling is money, does tend to mask the evident expressive dimensions of gambling and this is especially so in societies dominated by the language of market exchange. As Henry and Mars (1978) writing in another context point out, this means that there is a tendency to overestimate the relevance of economic factors. Secondly, as Cornish (1978) shows in his extensive review, economistic approaches have not been especially successful in explaining the phenomenon,

burdened as they are with the elusive notion of rational economic behaviour (Eadington, 1976). Despite the development of very sophisticated models, taking into account subjective perceptions of odds and probabilities and so on, the evidence on the rationality of gambling behaviour is inconclusive.[15] In any event as Devereux (1968) argues, punters may simply make mistakes in assessing chances, be ignorant of how to do it or be subject to erroneous reasoning and false information. These possibilities do not necessarily mean that gamblers are irrational, they may simply be wrong. This does not, however, rule out the possibility of a financial motivational logic, it merely suggests that notions of economic rationality are insufficiently perverse to cope with the complexities of the phenomenon. The observation of Downes et al (1976) concerning patterns of re-investment and retention of winnings mentioned earlier, could suggest, for example, that for some, betting makes some sense as an inverted form of saving![16]

To some extent the problem of rationality also reflects the difficulties of treating gambling as an homogenous phenomenon. This tendency is also shared by the pyscho-analytic tradition which has developed a systematic body of thought on gambling revolving around two major themes: the orgasmic, addictive aspects of gambling on the one hand; and the role of gambling in the resolution of the infantile Oedipal conflicts on the other. The evident universalism, teleology and disregard for the phenomenal reality of gambling forms make an extensive discussion of this genre superfluous here. It should be said, however, that sociological approaches have also displayed important weaknesses but it is instructive to turn to these contributions at this juncture.

Sociological Accounts

The sociological tradition on gambling has historically been dominated by functionalist accounts. These vary considerably in their sophistication and in their scope of application, for example, from the macroscopic concerns of Devereux (1949) to the more parochial concerns of Zola (1964) and Newman (1972) with local social systems. This emphasis is to some extent a reflection of the sociological hegemony of American functionalism in the 1950's and '60's and also of the fact that functionalism whatever its undoubted and many weaknesses is an excellent 'de-bunker'. In a sense it represents the 'natural' reflex of sociologists confronted with a field dominated by moralists. Other perspectives do, however, flow into the sociological narrative which range from theories which in one way or another view gambling as an expression of some generic element of the human condition to interactionist accounts of the role of gambling in terms of the establishment and maintenance of self and so on. Both are orientated to the question of 'what makes gamblers tick', though it is evident that functionalist undertones are still present, even in the work of Goffman for example.

What these approaches also tend to have in common, however, is a concern with the gambler; it is gambling which is problematic rather than its control or, particularly, its exploitation. This reflects a more general weakness of the sociological literature: namely its tendency to concentrate on the demand side of the equation to the neglect of the question of supply. To anticipate later criticism, this emphasis is misguided because involvement in gambling must depend to some extent on what is offered and how particular activities are promoted and packaged.

However, while such classifications are inevitably somewhat arbitrary and tend to ride roughshod over particular contributions, it is possible to identify

in the literature, universalistic-anthropological, functionalist and interpretative accounts.

A common approach to 'explaining' gambling as a social phenomenon is to view it in terms of some universal feature of human nature, an emphasis is promoted by the observation of the ubiquity of gambling in human societies (Li and Smith, 1976). This emphasis displays a range of sophistication and assumes a number of guises. Veblen (1934), for example, views gambling as a 'subsidiary trait of the barbarian temperament' which had its roots in primitive animism, and was quite inappropriate and even represented a threat to the industrial order.[17] While his concerns are quite different, Caillois (1961) also stresses the animistic precedents of gambling but here gambling is linked to one of the four universal features of play activity namely alea (chance). In games of chance the player takes a passive role, surrenders to destiny and so on. As with other features of play, 'alea' performs the role of providing the individual with a substitute world, a secondary reality where equality is the norm, a condition patently denied in the everyday world. Gambling thus relates to an aspect of the human condition and retains its pertinence in modern competitive societies in which success is a scarce commodity but where some compensation may be had by cavorting with chance.

It has been argued that such grandiose concepts as human nature of the sort implicitly employed in these accounts hardly constitute an explanation of gambling behaviour. There is indeed a general antipathy towards such notions in sociology. This prejudice may be premature but essentialism of this sort is often contradicted by evidence of the varying significance of gambling in different societies and with the same society - paradoxically, Veblen's observation on gambling 'as conspicuous consumption' is a case in

point here.[18] In addition the compensatory emphasis is not, as Downes et al (1976) point out, especially supported by the observation of the propensity to gamble among the upper classes! It can also be seen that in these accounts gambling is equated with chance tout court, compounding the error of treating all forms of gambling alike. Even if the formal objections to this style of reasoning are suspended then, other serious difficulties remain.

Functionalist elements intrude into many analyses of gambling but the most ingenious and explicit functionalist account is provided by Devereux (1949, cf. 1968). Devereux is concerned with the meaning of gambling in American society, focusing on horserace gambling and lotteries.[19] Noting the concurrent ubiquity of gambling in modern Western society with its widespread denigration, Devereux locates the significance of gambling within the conflicts of the core value system of Christian/Puritan-Capitalist culture.[20] The contradictions involved in the ideological marriage of puritanism and capitalism and the allegiance to wider Christian values clearly cannot be resolved through a critique of the total system of capitalism. Instead such value conflicts are displaced onto the conveniently segregated scapegoat of gambling which superficially represents a negation of the capitalist order but in fact collates some of its more unsavoury characteristics. Gambling provides the safety value through which potentially disruptive contradictions may escape, "in effect, gambling becomes a whipping boy." (Devereux, 1968, p. 58).[21]

The strain in core values isomorphically repeats the tenseful experience of gambling action and this provides a clue to the personal functions which gambling performs, allowing individuals to escape temporarily from the constraints of everyday life and so on. The propensity to gamble will to some extent reflect the individual's location in society and relative insulation

from the core values through the protection afforded by associational and community memberships.[22]

A range of environmental stimuli, however, are also related to the motivation to gamble. Among these is intrinsic interest in activities with which gambling has been historically associated such as horse-racing.[23] Devereux observes that horse-racing provides a culturally sanctioned form of gambling. This is because the gambling elements in horse-racing are better disguised and it comes with a bundle of ready-made rationalisations (c.f. Scott, 1968). While the analysis evidently moves uneasily between societal functions and individual motivations, it also tacitly acknowledges that different forms of gambling have their own packages of possible attractions and that situational variables may be important factors in individual motivation.

Similar conclusions could be drawn from two less ambitious studies within this tradition by Newman (1972) in Britain and Zola (1964) in the United States, which examine the role of gambling in local working class communities and its contribution to social integration. For both writers the functionality of gambling operates at both the individual and community levels. For the regulars of Hoff's East Side cafe gambling affords achievement and recognition whereas for East End betting shop punters it provides an opportunity for creative decision making and engagement in various fantasy roles denied expression in everyday life.

> "... involvement in betting on horses and greyhounds, with its intricate study of a multitude of complex variables, replaces for the working man the features of decision making and judgement which life ordinarily lacks".
>
> (Newman, 1972, p. 229).

However, for Zola gambling also represents a harmless means for 'getting back at the system' and for Newman, betting shop gambling provides a legitimate means of adapting to dominant values out of the reach of the majority of the population. It offers a perfect shadow system of the dominant culture while the social organisation of the betting shop also tended to reinforce working class values embodied in communal sociability. Despite the perceived negative, economic logic of gambling, betting is a rational pursuit producing a range of non-pecuniary benefits either unattainable or too costly elsewhere:

> "... within the situational reality of the majority of working class men, gambling makes sense, ... there is in this situational context more to the activity of gambling than hope of material reward and gratification".
>
> (Newman, 1972, p. 227).

Despite the formal weaknesses of this kind of analysis, both accounts are useful in the stress which is placed on the situational context of gambling and their implicit assumption that factors sustaining interest may be specific to particular groups of people and activities.

Notwithstanding the evident methodological and theoretical differences these are assumptions shared by some writers of the interpretative genre which ranges from the symbolic interactionism of Goffman (1972) and Herman (1967) for example, to the ethnomethodological approach of Scott (1968) and Oldman (1974). As was suggested earlier, Goffman's account derives mainly from his observations on gaming whereas both Herman and Scott are scholars of the American racetrack. Goffman tends to assume that his empirical base is prototypical of the gambling phenomenon whereas the other two authors are more reflexive in their concern to point out the distinctive features of the form of gambling studied as different forms are

seen to sustain different meanings.

The significance of gambling for Goffman lies in its guise as the prototype of 'action' insofar as it allows for the establishment of 'character' and the voluntary re-creation of 'self' in a society where the opportunities for doing so are increasingly circumscribed. Through gambling, individuals are enabled to realign themselves with values such as courage, gameness, integrity, composure and so on, which are normally displaced in everyday life in the attempt to avoid 'fatefulness' and gain security.

Herman and Scott alternatively, emphasise the intellectual work involved in the activities of regular track bettors. The empirical indeterminacy of horserace betting Herman suggests, demands of most regular players 'genuine mental effort'. Scott, indeed, sees horserace gambling as one aspect of the information game in which players' decision making strategies are orientated to deciphering and interpreting the many variables and varied information confronting them, and to unmasking the strategies of the professional actors, in the process of 'doping out their selections'.[24] For Scott, deliberations over, and the dramatic rehearsal of competing lines of action constitute moments of everyday rationality. This view would be broadly shared by Herman who notes the self control, conservatism and lack of recklessness of racetrack betting. Given the incompleteness of the information, Scott is concerned with how individuals make sense of their activity to themselves, fellow players and outsiders.[25] Oldman's (1974) study of roulette players who are also able to see their activity as 'work' despite the exclusive role of chance in determining the outcomes in their game, runs along broadly similar lines.

Herman usefully points to the different meanings of gambling for

different groups of track attenders for whom the 'gambling as work' interpretation is thus more or less salient.[26] However, both he and Goffman pose gambling in a compensatory role as a means of establishing self, enhancing self-esteem and in a society in which especially in the occupational sphere, this becomes increasingly difficult. All these accounts then share an emphasis on what may be termed the 'expressive rationality' of gambling though Herman and Scott retain an allegiance to the economic rationality of horserace betting.

While there does not appear to be a great deal of empirical support for the compensatory model (Cornish, 1978; Downes et al, 1976), the accounts of Herman and Scott do have the advantage of focusing on specific rewards and attractions which may be provided by particular forms and experienced by particular groups of bettors. It is equally apparent, however, that as with other perspectives, the manner of provision of gambling opportunities tends to be taken for granted. Nevertheless, the emphasis on the processual aspects of gambling behaviour is a helpful corrective to those who would pose gambling as a fixed and constant phenomenon of human society.

The Sociological Tradition: summary discussion

The question of why people gamble thus has elicited great ingenuity from sociologists if few attempts at systematic verification. Where the latter has been undertaken the exercise has been limited by the lack of determinacy of many theories (c.f. Downes et al, 1976). However, apart from the shared emphasis on social and cultural influences on gambling behaviour, a number of other points seem clear from this discussion.

First, the more general the theory of motivation, the less likely it is to appreciate the distinctions between forms of gambling and the more likely it

is to view gambling as an homogenous phenomenon. It has already been suggested that this is mistaken and as Cornish (1978) argues the fact that a generic term 'gambling' exists does not mean necessarily that it can be directly appropriated by a sociological perspective. As the author suggests, the search for general motives is also rather 'academic' given that people engage in distinct gambling practices.

Second, it is also evident that when attention is given to particular forms of gambling the factors which are identified as relevant to the subjective experience of the gambler must in some minimal sense be learned and therefore are only pertinent to the question of continued gambling. They are thus not likely to be especially relevant to the 'why' question in the first place. The qualification needed here, however, concerns the likelihood of anticipatory socialisation into the mores of particular activities. This possibility is suggested by personal experience and by the empirical finding of parental gambling as a strong predictor of gambling involvement (c.f. Downes et al, 1976). This further supports continuing relevance of situational factors in gambling participation.

These considerations point thirdly to a further weakness of the approaches discussed so far, namely the concentration on the motivation of the gambler at the expense of the question of what facilities to gamble are available in the social milieu of the individual. Different gambling forms are more likely to be heavily represented and promoted in some milieu than in others. The conventional approaches tend in other words to see supply emerging in response to demand. There are enough precedents from wider economic activities to suggest the possibility of the reverse relationship. Hence the degree of exposure to gambling outlets is a relevant consideration and is congruent with the kind of 'freedom from inhibitions' argument

suggested by Devereux.

Theorists such as Herman, Scott, Zola and Newman who have highlighted a particular form of gambling - all refer to horserace betting as it happens - tend to find an easy congruence between the nature of the activity and the satisfaction of certain expressive needs though the economic rationality is not completely discounted. The danger, however, even for the 'interpretative writers' is that the possibility of alternative subjective interpretations of the activity in question are neglected (c.f. Oldman, 1974). On the other hand it does seem clear that an adequate account of gambling behaviour must take into account the differential space provided for certain rewards by the inherent features of different gambling activities.

A common element in most of these sociological accounts is that they are also largely a-historical and neglect the role which traditions and sub-cultural habits may serve as situational influences on particular modes of gambling involvement. This possibility which is taken up below, is obliquely suggested by Cornish (1978) in an important attempt to produce a model of gambling behaviour which takes into account some of the criticisms of the conventional approaches.

The model suggests that the decision to engage in some form of gambling is a function of the interaction of two main sets of variables which might be labelled, personal circumstances and situational factors. Personal circumstances include firstly, the 'freedom' of an individual to engage in gambling activity in the sense of an absence of practical constraints on time and money. Such constraints might derive from other activities, memberships and interests, however, this notion might be extended to include an absence of ideological constraints incompatible with gambling (c.f. Devereux, 1949).

Secondly there should also be a readiness to engage in some form of expressive behaviour as a result of a general sense of dissatisfaction, generating stimulus-seeking behaviour. Such a state may derived from broad socio-economic circumstances, personal problems of milieu and more transient, "temporarily significant events in everyday life producing more ephemeral mood swings, emotional states and expressive needs". (1978, p. 158). Whilst there is considerable room for the operation of individual differences here, both freedom and readiness may be conditioned by sociological factors.

Into this formula, however, one must also compute the active constituent of environmental stimuli and 'information' or situational factors. Situational factors embody the information, provided by promoters, available about different forms of expressive behaviour, including gambling, which helps to define expressive needs more clearly. Gambling in this light may appear as one 'solution'to these needs. Situational factors comprise ecologic variables such as the visibility of the activity, the availability of outlets, definitions of socially acceptable forms, technical knowledge, sporting associations and so on. Added to these are the structural characteristics of particular gambling activities, information about the attractiveness of which is provided by promoters.

Following engagement with a particular form of gambling, definition of need may become clearer, more information about the activity assimilated, additional learned satisfactions experienced and more refined information on ecologic and structural variables will be available and so on.

Two points may be made about the model. First, it emphasises that initial engagement in gambling may be fortuitous and entirely contingent

though it may be subsequently reinforced in a number of predictable ways. Secondly, it implicitly suggests that situational factors which crucially include the visibility of the activity are likely to be affected by cultural traditions, for example betting traditions within a culture to which individuals are exposed. The tradition will imply differential availability of information about gambling forms within a particular culture or subculture. In this context the role of cultural transmission becomes evident and is reflected in the finding noted earlier regarding parental involvement in gambling. Obviously, more information will be available to individuals about betting in a culture with betting as opposed to gaming traditions.

This line of reasoning provides the aperture through which the importance of the historical dimension to the issues may be appreciated. Gambling habits and traditions in working class culture, for example, will be an important constraint on the effective availability of different forms of gambling though this would also depend on the strategies of promoters. Indeed a particular gambling response to expressive needs may become relatively entrenched in particular cultures. Further, as Cornish argues, the relative stability of the social distribution of gambling activities could suggest that certain needs and responses have become institutionalised.

Following this conclusion the rest of the chapter will consider the relation between working class culture and horserace betting which seems historically to have satisfied such an institutionalised need.

Working Class Culture: some preliminary issues

To invoke the term working class culture is to court a number of difficulties and a notion which combines such complex concepts is likely to be doubly problematic. It is therefore necessary to make a number of observations

which will clarify the assumptions implied by the use of the concept in this discussion.

Clearly to be avoided is the circularity evident in the use of the notion in many discussions (for example Hoggart, 1958) where the empirical identification of apparently distinctive cultural forms was tantamount to the theoretical establishment of the 'working class'. In fact theoretical concern with class boundaries has been noticeably dormant in this area. Indeed, as Crichter (1979) argues, the empirical discovery of working class culture was part of the broadly sociological response in the 1960's to the claim that the notion of the 'working class' in Britain was redundant.

Be this as it may, it cannot be maintained conversely that the total configuration of the working class is constituted solely in the structuring of the wage form. This would mean separating the cultural and the material in a way which forbade the idea of the working class as a living subject. It is, however, possible to talk of working class culture in a non-tautological manner and in a way as Clarke (1979) shows, which articulates developments in working class culture with changes in material conditions, in the structure of capital and its ramifications for wage labour.

The neglect of such a relationship and the consequent tendency to abstract working class culture from material production (and therefore from class itself) also appears as a hallmark of the sociological neo-Weberian tradition of Lockwood (1966) and Goldthorpe et al (1969) which probably best epitomises the conventional genre of writing on working class culture in this country. This work has been subject to numerous critiques (inter alia, Westergaard, 1970; Bulmer, 1975; Crichter, 1979). The abstraction of working class culture from production was partly a function of the failure to

recognise the specificity of the post-war economic climate in this country which temporarily at least, apparently rendered production as a non-problem. Additionally, critics pointed to the typically romantic, stereotyped and a-historical nature of the assumptions made especially in relation to the pivotal notion of 'traditional proletarian' culture (Lockwood, 1966) developed in the search for distinctive forms of social consciousness. The tendency to see the working class as a passive object rather than a creative subject of change (Crichter, 1979) and the failure to recognise the contradiction between the parochialism of 'traditional' working class culture and the class consciousness which it was assumed to purvey (Cousins and Davis, 1975) were also frequently voiced criticisms.

Among social historians conversely, there is considerable disagreement on the issue of the relationship between popular culture and working class culture (Cunningham, 1980).[27] In practice, however, there tends to be a good deal of overlap in the use of these terms (c.f. Yeo, 1981) and it is clear that the concrete historical forms of culture discussed, often find their way into both categories (c.f. Joyce, 1981; Delves, 1981; Yeo, 1981; Gammon, 1981).[28] It is evident in any event that there was considerable continuity between them (c.f. Cunningham, 1980; Joyce, 1981). While acknowledging that difficult conceptual issues exist, working class culture may, nevertheless, be taken to refer to the cultural forms and understandings sustained out of the everday experience of waged labour.

A crucial dimension of that experience of course, <u>is</u> labour and the tendency to abstract culture from material life appears only slightly less marked among historians than among sociologists. Willis (1979) has convincingly argued that such a trend mistakes both the nature of work and of culture. Culture refers not only to special, heightened forms of culture

but any experience which lies around 'central life struggles'. We are at our most cultural, argues Willis when we are at our most natural and unthinking. However, production is the privileged site and generator of working class culture. Shop floor culture is thus as much part of working class culture as forms of recreation and leisure and so on. A similar view is held by Joyce (1981) in his discussion of the nineteenth century factory North where the factory and work were at the centre of working class culture, one which evidenced the continuity of a broad and dominant popular culture with the legacy of "older and more spontaneous ways" (p. 286).

Working class culture then neither stops nor starts at the factory gates. In fact, the interconnection between the cultural and the material has been implicitly noted by many historians. One obvious example of such a relation is the long struggle over 'St. Monday' which involved simultaneously, conflicts over working and recreational practices. Less obvious is the way in which, as we shall see, cultural forms such as betting transcended the work-leisure division.

Further conceptual problems may be signalled at this point insofar as they have a bearing on the discussion of working class gambling. The 'new' social history has implicitly raised two important issues (Johnson, 1979; S. and E. Yeo, 1981).[29] First, as was implied by the argument above, there are dangers in parcelling up elements of life experience into hypostasised categories such as 'leisure' for example.[30] Secondly, the emphasis on 'social control' typical of writing in this genre (Stedman-Jones, 1976), should not be taken to imply a completed result. Such a view tends to foreclose discussion of social processes of control as involving struggle and resistance as well as repression and manipulation and thus to deny the dynamic and dialectical elements of culture (Cunningham, 1980).[31] An additional problem, however,

is that discussions have tended implicitly to refer to male working class culture often neglecting the role of sexual divisions in the life of the working class and by the same token ignoring the distinctive contribution of women to that culture. Unfortunately the historical material does not permit this lacuna to be propertly filled in relation to gambling though the ensuing discussion is cognisant of this issue.

It is clear then that the term working class culture is a heuristic of some complexity and needs to be treated with some caution. In using it in this discussion there is implicit acknowledgement of its heteroqeneity, adaptiveness and inclusiveness of both material and other life experiences even if as Yeo (1981) argues, intellectual constraints allow us to do no more than see the cultural in the material and the material in the cultural.

Popular gambling in nineteenth century Britain took many forms, but prominent among these was horserace betting. However, despite the great range of pastimes, traditions and recreations studied by the new history, little systematic attention appears to have been given to gambling. While one or two useful discussions exist for the most part reliance has to be placed on snippets of information provided coincidentally by others. In what follows an attempt will be made to piece together what is known of gambling and its role in working class culture.

Working Class Culture and Gambling

That gambling is a neglected feature of studies of working class culture is illustrated by two recent surveys of the field, one historical, the other more sociological in character, which offer only fleeting references to gambling. Cunningham's (1980) otherwise thorough study of the development of leisure during the Industrial Revolution, for example, finds it sufficient to note the

association of many nineteenth century sports - from the cruel sports to cricket - with gambling, an activity itself often centred on the 'pub', and that gambling remained one of the privatised forms of popular leisure largely impervious to the reforming zeal of the middle class. Still less, however, is to be gained from Clarke et al's **Working Class Culture** (1979). Nevertheless, some clues are to be gained from what little literature does exist.

Constructing a mosaic from the decidedly jaundiced fragments of evidence produced by parliamentary enquiries, police records, social reformers and early budgetary surveys, McKibbin (1979) makes a number of interesting observations worthy of note here. Popular, mass gambling it is argued, really took off in this country in the 1880's and before 1914 was, as many contemporary observers noted, almost entirely confined to betting on horse races. While some engagement with the major races of the racing calendar had been evident for some time, the improved system of communications and rising real incomes provided the important spur to the expansion of betting activity which emerged as a distinctively proletarian pastime. The scale and organisation of betting in the late nineteenth century represented a quantum change from anything known before - despite the tendency for official investigations to see the aftermath of 1914-18 as the real watershed. Certainly, 'official' perceptions testified to the commonplace and ubiquitous nature of betting among the working class in the first couple of decades of this century. Substantiating such claims is, of course, fraught with difficulties, many of which persist today - betting turnover is a particularly incompetent measure of the extent of betting activity, for example. (See below). Nevertheless, allowing for these difficulties, contemporary estimates, according to this author, indicate that betting was pretty big business; that the absolute numbers of people betting on horses probably increased during

these years; that the ratio of regular to occasional bettors was about 1:2, in total involving around 10 million working class people; that average stakes were low and that people generally bet as frequently as their means would allow.

The pre-eminence of horse-racing as a betting medium survived until the 1920's and the arrival of greyhound racing and the pools which effectively halted the growth of horserace betting. Greyhound racing was thoroughly proletarian but consumed a relatively small proportion of bettors. Football pools, however, quickly generated a huge following with its low cost, highly privatised format and in terms of simple numbers, probably overhauled racing as a medium for betting.

> "But it is safe to assume that the numbers betting were between 10-15 millions and that the majority of the working class bet fairly regularly, perhaps as much on horses as on the pools".
>
> (McKibbin, 1979, p. 155)

Hence the steady expansion in working class gambling from the 1880's to the mid-1930's appears to have been a function of both increasing numbers of bettors as well as new opportunities for betting. Despite its evidently widescale nature, however, it is clear that betting did not disrupt the domestic economy of working class people. In fact, though its impact was uneven, it became integrated as a taken for granted aspect of working class life, importing with it the language of its associated activities and confounding the social critique embodied in reformist ideologies.

The view that the rising real incomes of the late nineteenth century together with improved communications gave an enormous lift to the growth of horserace betting is entirely sensible. It is tentatively supported, for

example, by Vamplew (1976) who suggests that the injection from this source which stimulated the development of mass commercial entertainment, was bound to make its effect felt on gambling. Indicating the growing pervasiveness of the habit, Joyce (1981) also notes that in the 'political clubs' of the factory noth in the 1870's and 1880's, amusement quickly took over the early formal emphasis on instruction with the most frequent complaints from higher circles concerning drink and gambling. Yet it would be a mistake to be beguiled by the extensive late Victorian panic concerning 'gambling mania' (Dixon, 1980) as to the novelty of the practice. As noted earlier, the evidence from which such an assertion might be derived, however, circumspectly, is entirely problematic.

It should not be assumed then that this expansion of betting activity at this time is necessarily co-extensive with the establishment of a betting tradition, the germ of which, conversely was laid at least two or three decades earlier, specifically around mid-century.

Vamplew observes that at the time of the 1844 Select Committee on Gaming, betting on horse-racing was virtually unknown among the general public, except when attending a meeting. Apart from their own private wagering arrangements, upper class figures with the right credentials could also bet at Tattersalls but no comparable institution had emerged to cater for working class tastes. A decade later, however, Parliament had been persuaded to pass a bill suppressing betting houses. The intervening period had witnessed a minor explosion of what would now be called off-course betting. In Vamplew's account this appears to be primarily due to the foresight of a number of petty entrepreneurs who, in inventing betting lists and publicising their willingness to offer odds for cash bets, clearly tapped a bountiful well of an urban working class betting reserve. Bookmakers were

not altogether unknown on the racecourse but these innovators constituted the direct forerunners of the modern British betting shop. Contemporary sources cited by Vamplew suggest that by the early 1850's London could boast 100-150 betting houses, with not inconsiderable numbers scattered among provincial towns. Notions of excessive gambling and dire warnings about the future of the nation of the sort which were to become commonplace forty years later, rapidly gained currency. Bailey (1978), noting the use to which the pigeon post was put by way of racing results, also concurs in this picture of the mid-century growth in off-course betting and the threat to property which this growth was perceived to contain.

As will be shown later, the legislation merely unlocked a store of sharp ingenuity in the working class neighbourhood and among bookmakers, inducing a relocation rather than an end to betting. Indeed the increasing pace of local and national legislation attempting to regulate betting heralded an expansion of the betting habit rather than its demise. In response partly to legislative loop holes and partly to local demand, twenty-eight betting houses were known to exist in Glasgow by the 1870's for example.

Another qualitative indicator of the growth of working class betting was the expansion in all the paraphernalia in print concernign betting and (mainly) horse-racing. Despite their illegality, betting circulars and 'advice' continued to be distributed. The sporting press in its modern guise also owes its existence to this period. Expensive magazines dealing with the sports of gentlemen had long existed but these were of a different order to the cheap, popular racing papers and supplements which proliferated from the 1870's (Bailey, 1978). McKibbin (1979) suggests the readership of this press to be huge by the late 1880's, with the three major racing publications having a combined circulation of over a million. Continuing this function, the

emerging national 'Dailies' of the inter-war period found the provision of similar information, fronted by that curiosity of British journalism the ex-public school racing correspondent, indispensable in the circulation battle. Vamplew notes, however, that the publication of starting price returns was a general practice by most newspapers fifty or so years before - a practice for which off-course betting provides just about the only rationale.

The seeds of the modern betting tradition - that is, one directly traceable to contemporary habits - therefore appear to have been sewn rather earlier than suggested by McKibbin. As a number of writers implicitly suggest, however, it would be a mistake to over-estimate the novelty of such a tradition, new in important respects though it was. Bailey (1978), for example, suggests that gambling was a familiar vice among working men in the early nineteenth century, one nurtured within living memory by the State lotteries. Similarly, Delves (1981) in his local study of early nineteenth century leisure in Derby recalls the working class penchant for betting, racing and blood 'sports', the interest in which, of course, clearly shows that the popularity of many such activities derived as much from the opportunities afforded to gambling as from their intrinsic characteristics. Joyce's (1981) study is also instructive here. In his account of the culture of the north country factory, Joyce argues that the continuity of working class culture reflected the failure of the improving middle classes to reform the working class:

> "The Music Hall, the sports stadium and the popular press triumphed over the Mechanic's Institute and the Temperance Society."
>
> "The pint and the bet remained as much distinguishing marks of popular leisure as they had always been".
>
> (p. 286)

In the transition to a more stable and organised life, it is argued that the legacy of the older and more spontaneous ways was a powerful one. "The 1850's and 1860's was still a time of hard drinking and hard gambling" (p. 286) and in this, popular culture was still very much indebted to rural life.

The author thus ranks among those other recent social historians who emphasise continuity and adaption in popular culture rather than affording a central place to opposition and discontinuity (c.f. Cunningham, 1980). This valuable perspective need not be jettisoned in suggesting that it is possible to see a distinctive betting tradition emerging in the mid-nineteenth century from the more amorphous forms of expressive behaviour - which included forms of gambling - characteristic of popular culture thereto. It will be argued in due course that an explanation for this has to be located in the articulation and congruence of the broad conditions of then working class life and the structural and ecological characteristics which attached to horserace betting.

An important bridge between these traditions was provided by the 'pub'. It is a commonplace in this context to note that the publican was often at the heart of patterns of working class sociability both during and following attempts to modify popular culture (Cunningham, 1981; Malcolmson, 1974). Thus it was also with off-course betting. The early bookmaking entrepreneurs - when not publicans themselves - found a ready and mutually beneficial outlet for their betting lists in public houses which effectively became the first betting shops. The 1853 Act was thus aimed at public houses and although this forced a withdrawal of overt betting services, pubs continued to be a scene of betting business for decades. The legacy of this practice may still sometimes be found in discoloured notices reminding customers that the passing of betting slips on the premises is illegal.

On the whole, however, the focus of betting activity moved from the pub to the 'street'. As Delves (1981) implies the 'street' was well situated to receive it. In an important observation, the author notes the crucial role of the street in working class recreation and culture more generally, for the street was both "a vitally important location of working class intercourse" (p. 97) and for earning a living. Attacks on many recreations were also thereby attacks on the control of the street, a struggle which according to Delves was also played out in daily conflict with the police on the possession and usage of the street. If the situation in early nineteenth century Derby is representative, then in most urban contexts the street can be assumed to have been established as a bulwark and totem of working class culture around mid-century.

In this light, it is not surprising that an efficient system of street betting quickly became established in response to the mid-century legislation. Street bookmakers, in fact, flourished, providing a service which because of the need for co-operation and protection from law enforcement also required the trust of the bettor and hence afforded some measure of accountability and honesty on the part of the bookmaker. In one form or another illegal street betting continued until the 1960 legislation and according to McKibbin its public nature "gave town life in this country a colour and definition that has now disappeared". (p. 159). It was the frantic openness of street betting, of course, which aroused the sensitivity of reformers. The 1906 Street Betting Act, ingenuously named as it was, precisely attempted to proscribe the activities of the street and hence by the same token constituted a direct attack on working class culture, an attack neatly epitomised in the concept of 'loitering'.[32] As it had done in the past, however, street culture showed itself to be remarkably resilient to such intrusions and continued to afford a

haven for, primarily, horserace betting.

A third important structure through which the betting tradition was nurtured was 'work' itself. The intricate system of 'bookies runners' especially characteristic of illegal betting in the southern half of the country (Hood, 1976) would be a familiar memory to many working class adults. Indeed some well-publicised court cases in the Midlands in the mid-1970's indicated the persistence of this system at the giant Longbridge motor works, long after betting was legalised in 1960. In the inter-war years, however, the structure of illegal gambling was so pervasive that Vamplew (1976) is able to claim that any workplace in which a score of men worked in close proximity was bound to have a bookie's agent or 'runner'. Impressionistic accounts, such as Walter Greenwood's novel **Love on the Dole,** for example, tend to confirm this picture.

The deliberations of parliamentary enquiries in 1923 and 1932 using equally anecdotal evidence are harnessed by McKibbin in suggesting that:

> "Equally, bookies' agents in factories and warehouses were easily recognised. They were also ubiquitous; hardly a factory gate or an unemployment exchange was without 'pitch'. Large factories and shipyards were almost bureaucratically organised, with a whole hierachy of touts and sub-touts".
>
> (p. 160)

Official bodies such as the above, reforming groups and employers, of course, were prone to read desultory effects for labour discipline into such practices, though in practice employers took a rather more pragmatic view. Interestingly, McKibbin notes that some employer support for legalising betting derived from the desire to rid their factories of this diversion. Similar complaints, however, were par for the ideological course in the late

nineteenth century struggle over gambling. At a more parochial level, Joyce (1981) observes the rueful acceptance by north country factory owners of the persistence of betting in the culture of the factory in spite of their newly increased paternalistic output. Hence, though the evidence is scanty and largely anecdotal, it seems reasonable to conclude that following close on the heels of the street, the factory and work provided a further institutional support for the working class betting tradition.

Working Class Culture and Gambling: Contemporary Perspective

Fragmentary though it is, the historical evidence tends to support the view that horserace betting constituted an important strand of the developing culture of the urban working class of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century. Contemporary data shows furthermore that this tradition has continued well into the late twentieth century. It will be instructive at this point to sketch the broad dimensions of gambling in present day Britain insofar as they are relevant to the concerns of this argument. It should be said, however, that this is a particularly hazardous task in view of the ambiguity characteristic of most sources of information concerning gambling. Generalisations then, can only be made with a good deal of caution.

The major sources of information, in fact, derive from official statistics collected in connection with fiscal operations since 1967, post-Second World War data constructed by the Churches Council on gambling, a number of publicly and privately sponsored budgetary surveys and a couple of social surveys designed for more explictly sociological purposes. The methodological problems peculiar to each of these sources are well known and need not be discussed here (but c.f. Cornish, 1978). However, even the most apparently straightforward questions concerning the logistics of the gambling enterprise are thus fraught with difficulties to say nothing of more profound social

issues.

Further complications derive from the nature of measures of gambling activity. As previously noted, the relationship between gambling turnover and expenditure varies systematically with different forms of gambling, and estimates of expenditure itself are liable to a number of distorting influences. Both such indices, however, have provided a good deal of the stuff of the debate on the logistics of gambling, particularly in the less disinterested discussions of the 'social problem' of gambling. The quantitative information then is an unreliable indicator of the extent, relative popularity of and participation in, different forms of gambling though it is possible to make some sense of it and something approaching an interpretive consensus has emerged among the more sophisticated of recent contributions.

In terms of gambling activity as a whole, Cornish (1978) in the most recent survey of the data argues that although it is difficult to gauge changes over time, it is nevertheless doubtful whether outlays on gambling rose substantially in the twenty-five years since 1950 either as a proportion of disposable income or in real terms. The tendency of proponents of the 'post-1960 explosion'[33] theory to exaggerate the extent of increases in gambling stems partly from the low base rate accorded to gambling activity in the pre-legalisation era. This was mainly derived from the informal estimates of the CCG which, following a 'ticking off' from the 1951 Royal Commission, subsequently reduced estimates of 'illegal' cash betting activity (Downes, 1976). Cornish (1978) also argues that the 'exaggeration' reflected the increasingly strong effects of inflation.

However, if gambling as a whole presented a picture in real terms of unspectacular growth this would also have masked movements in the fortunes

of individual forms of gambling, some of which exhibited sporadic phases of growth and decline. According to Cornish, for example, between 1950-75 the growth in gambling turnover can almost completely be accounted for by the growth in off-course betting which grew at over six times the rate of increase in pools betting - though this again depends on the contested base rate of earlier levels. By 1976, according to estimates based on official sources, collated by Cornish, off-course betting with bookmakers accounted for nearly 50% of betting turnover.

Table 12 Estimated Annual Turnovers for different forms of gambling

	1974/5 (£ millions)	1975/6 (£ millions)
Bookmakers off-course	1,607	1,791
Gaming Clubs*	351	477
Gaming Machines	260	358
Bingo	246	299
Pools	224	242
Bookmakers on-course	160	180
Greyhound Totalisator	69	73
Others	38	25
Horse race Totalisator	31	35

Source: adapted from Cornish (1978, p. 15).

* There is some dispute as to whether the amount of money exchanged for 'chips' is to count as turnover as above, or whether the effective circulation of stakes should do so.

Customs and Excise returns show further that in activities covered by the General Betting Duty, the proportions bet off-course, increased from 80.2% in 1967 to 91.6% in 1974 and that the proportion of turnover accounting for all Betting Duty activities increased from 55% in 1968 to 78% in 1973. There seems little doubt then that the period following legislation especially, witnessed an increase in off-course betting activity, counterbalanced by a relative decline in most other forms of gambling. The reasons for this

increase are not directly relevant to the present discussion but they are clearly related to the increased availability and visibility of off-course betting outlets and new types of betting patterns made possible by the new accessibility of outlets following the 1960 legislation.

More important for present purposes, however, is the location of horserace betting in this broad logistical context. On the basis of the figures collated above, Cornish argues that horserace betting takes up between 47% and 54% of turnover, 90% of this is bet off-course and most of that in betting shops. Off-course betting includes that on dog racing and other context events but within the bookmaking industry it has been accepted for purposes of calculating the Horserace Betting Levy, that 80% is claimed by horse-racing - this figure can thus be assumed to be a minimum.[34]

It would naturally be facile to leap to conclusions regarding the relative popularity of horserace betting on this basis. Relative expenditure on this form of gambling is, however, broadly in line with the relative contribution to total turnover. Cornish estimates that horserace betting amounts for 44% of total expenditure, 90% of this off-course. This is broadly confirmed by the Royal Commission on Gambling (1978) whose statistics show that off-course betting accounts for 44% of expenditure, the overwhelming proportion of which is devoted to horserace betting.

Table 13 Gambling Expenditure 1976

	Gross Revenue before Tax i.e. money spent	
	£ millions	%
Off-course betting	355	44.7
Football Pools	163	20.5
Slot machines	125	15.9
Casinos	100.5	12.7
On-Course Betting	34	4.3
Bingo	15	1.9
	793.5	100.0

Source: adapted from Royal Commission on Gambling, 1978, p. 3.

This broad logistical map, of course, is unable to give any clues as to relative participation in gambling though this had been an implication of CCG reports (CCF 1974). While expenditure on betting is at least twice that on football pools, Downes et al's (1976) survey indicates that twice as many people admit to doing the pools as to patronising betting shops. Hence the questions of the distribution, frequency and intensity of participation are entirely separate issues. Sociological data on these items is however, meagre though by far the most thorough attempt to furnish such information is provided by Downes et al (1976). A number of observations can be made on the basis of available information.

First, a number of sources suggest that there is little doubt that in broad participatory terms, the football pools are the most popular form of gambling in this country, accounting for between 35% and 40% of the adult population (Cornish, 1978; Downes, 1976; RCG, 1978). This proportion also

appears to have remained relatively stable since 1950 though it appears to be increasingly (working) class specific (Cornish, 1978).

Second, the next most popular form is cash betting on horseracing although the estimates differ widely according to the definition of participation and so on. From a number of surveys reviewed by Cornish, it appears that between 20% and 30% of people bet, about 10% on a regular basis. Of the recent surveys the RCG's (1978) estimate is the most cautious. It is suggested that although 63% of people surveyed claimed an occasional bet on the major races, only 9% were regular (at least monthly) bettors. Cornish interprets the existing data as suggesting that possibly fewer people bet off-course than in 1950, but a greater proportion of these are likely to be regulars.[35]

Third, gambling in whatever form is not gender blind and there is no doubt that men bet in considerably greater numbers than women. However, while relations between the sexes in leisure activities is an important and neglected issue (c.f. Cunningham, 1980) it is not one which can be persued here except to note that in discussion of gambling and working class culture one is primarily, by default, talking about male activities. However, the sexual division of gambling is clearly related to other sexual divisions and finds its significance in these, rather than in the nature of gambling activity itself. It is true, however, that attacks on gambling have often exploited the differential interest of men and women in the family budget and thus gambling has often been mobilised as a divisive force in the working class family.

Fourth, it is abundantly clear that while gambling, tout court, confounds simple associations with socio-economic status (Downes et al, 1976) there is

also little doubt that cash betting as a type of gambling is inversely related to socio-economic status. This relationship is bound to be more porous than it was prior to 1960 because of the greater accessibility of betting outlets. However, notwithstanding, the usual objections to official categorisations of social class utilised by most of the surveys, it is evident that cash betting is disproportionately concentrated among the working class although there are a number of variations within and between this category in terms of age, skill, marital status and so on (Downes, 1976). Downes et al's survey which uses somewhat more sophisticated classifications, suggested that 32% of the lower working class, compared to 4% of the upper class claimed use of such facilities, corroborating the drift of other surveys. In addition it was found that regular use of betting shops was particularly class-based in this direction.

Fifth, as the broad logistical data would tend to indicate, Downes et al found an overwhelming tendency for cash betting to be concentrated on horse-racing, 91.1% of men and 99.8% of women who bet, do so exclusively on horses. The virtual monopoly of the off-course betting market - by horse-racing - one in which working class people are the principal source of demand - allows Downes et al to argue, correctly, that theories of gambling which hypothesize a deep rooted impulse to gamble are clearly misplaced, otherwise one would expect a more even distribution of punters among different forms. However, the authors advance an equally metaphysical view which suggests that this phenomenon:

> "must relate profoundly to the mainsprings of Western culture in general and English culture in particular".
>
> (p. 129)

At such a level of generality, such a statement is undeniable but is somewhat belied by the authors' speculative listing of the possible attractions of horserace betting - the combination of man and animal, interpretative and actuarial skills and so on. As has been argued previously, what is required is a more systematic attempt to relate structural characteristics and life conditions in the historical establishment of a tradition which subsequently transmits other learned features of the activity.

Sixth, and turning to more modest issues, evidence suggests a continuity with patterns of staking mentioned by McKibbin (1979) in that stakes both per visit and per race are typically low in betting shops and that the majority of punters make one bet per visit. However, a substantial majority of regulars bet more frequently per visit (Downes et al, 1976). Cornish argues in fact that average stakes in real terms have probably fallen though this is counteracted by changes in betting habits whereby more, smaller bets are made than previously. This is consistent with changes in opportunities to bet wrought by betting shops and the changes in race fixture organisation which has meant more individual events to bet on within a given time period.[36] It is therefore possible that existing turnover is maintained from a relatively stable perhaps smaller population of bettors who participate more frequently and heavily than previously in ways consistent with the changed conditions of betting organisation. This would support the assertion of the earlier discussion of the importance of the provision of facilities in gambling behaviour.

Finally, little mention has been made of either forms of gaming, in which there is little working class participation though the routinisation of gaming facilities probably means that this situation will not continue, or of bingo which is a predominantly female, working class pastime. These are

important strands in the gambling spectrum but pale somewhat in comparison with off-course cash betting on horse-racing.

From this brief review of the available literature some inescapable conclusions emerge. Although much of the literature shows time and money expended on gambling to be low and participation moderate, gambling clearly has continued to be a notable strand in working class life. Further, of the forms of gambling which are represented among working class practices, horserace betting continues to hold an important place. What little ethnographic data there is tends to support this view though examples have been concerned with the problematic area of the 'traditional' working class community (c.f. Dennis et al, 1956; Newman, 1972). In simple participation terms, racing tends to be overshadowed by the pools, but against this one has to compute the privatised, home based nature of pools betting and relatively lower expenditure involved. Nevertheless, these two forms are clearly central to working class gambling. The betting tradition initiated in the mid-nineteenth century then, finds a vibrant successor in the late twentieth century.

However, patterns and organisation of betting have altered considerably in the meantime. It will be argued that it is also possible to detect sources of threat to the tradition. The evidence is tentative but there are grounds for believing that off-course betting turnover and expenditure have declined in real terms since the late 1970's. In 1983, for example, Customs and Excise figures showed that off-course betting turnover declined in money terms for the first time in two decades. Between 1975 and 1982, the General Index of Retail Prices increased by some 140% whereas, in the same period, off-course betting turnover increased by only 89%. Official statistics indicate further that expenditure on all forms of gambling has declined in

real terms since 1975.

Table 14 Off-course Betting Turnover and Total Gambling Expenditure 1975-82.

	Off-course Betting Turnover £m.	Total Gambling Expenditure at 1975 prices £m.
1975	1,607	680
1976	1,791	658
1977	1,859	642
1978	2,165	671
1979	2,266	606
1980	2,820	665
1981	3,094	626
1982	3,045	n.a.

Source: Reports of the Commissioners for Customs and Excise, Central Statistical Office, National Income and Expenditure

Economic recession would seem to be an obvious factor in this decline, but it will become evident that factors operating in the political economy of betting may also be important contributors. Nevertheless, that a qualified continuity in the betting tradition is identifiable is, in no small measure, due to one important intervening variable. This is the process of the social control of gambling which helped to cement the tradition in working class culture.

Gambling and Social Control

There are precedents for believing, as Delves (1981) argues, that in some circumstances attempts to restrict particular activities often heightens attachment to them. This appears particularly true of gambling. From the mid-nineteenth century there was a stream of initiatives to control predominantly working class betting which evidently served only to entrench such habits in working class life.

There is no doubt that for rather more than a century following the 1853 Betting Houses Act, legislation on gambling was class discriminatory. Whether it may, coterminously, be labelled as class legislation, however, is another matter.[37] Dixon (1980) argues that the 1906 Street Betting Act, for example, needs to be seen in the context of wider political, economic and social changes, notably the economic and social crisis of confidence of late Victorian society. The panic over working class gambling in the decades preceding the Act was symptomatic of a more general, structurally induced antagonism towards the working class. Hence it would be a mistake to see such legislation as simply the result of one class using its political power on another.[38] The mediation of these factors in the ideologies and strategies of the broad anti-gambling movement made the societal reaction to working class gambling and betting a complex phenomenon and one not adequately represented in a model of successful pressure group politics.[39]

The anti-gambling movement, in fact, comprised a number of elements. These included a generalised bourgeois reaction to the assumed deleterious effects of gambling on work discipline, on the legitimacy of capitalist property relations and so on. Associated with the nervous excitment of city life, it could also be blamed for racial deterioration, increased effeminancy and the decline of national sentiment. As McKibbin (1979) points out, however, there was neither a complete uniformity nor an absence of paradoxes in this position.[40] While political parties formally kept their distance from such arguments, Dixon reports that the Liberal Party concerned itself with the supposed exploitation of the working class by bookmakers. In addition, many labour leaders saw betting as diluting the organisational resolve of the working class. The support traditionally afforded working class bettors by aristocratic elements in the Lords also

became more tenuous. Not only were the interests of the latter becoming more congruent with those of the commercial bourgeoisie (Rubinstein, 1981), but damage was also being done to the propriety of racing itself through the association with gambling highlighted by some embarrassing court proceedings.[41] The focus on specifically working class off-course betting diverted attention away from racing (Dixon, 1980).

If there is a question about the origins of the legislation in terms of class relations, it is clear that its effects discriminated against working class people. In making loitering with intent to make or take a bet an offence, the 1906 legislation was explicitly directed at street betting while leaving untouched credit betting and the activities of gaming and 'sporting clubs'. Access to these facilities it need hardly be said, was extremely limited for the working class. Much to the relief of the racing hierachy, other clauses in the Bill effectively sanctioned betting on the racecourses, that is those in turn licensed by the Jockey Club. Thus for the first time, on-course betting was relieved of any possible threat of legal interference from moral entrepreneurs. Simultaneously, a virtual monopoly of legal, cash betting facilities was created for the race-course companies. However, while it is possible that this Act was the first instance of legislation directed at betting per se, it is clear that this trend of legislation dates from at least half a century earlier.

It would be a mistake, however, to represent class discrimination as the only current evident in the social control of gambling in modern times. Downes et al (1976) for example, distinguish five consectutive phases from the late middle ages, in which changes in the legal definition and social meaning of gambling as a social problem may be related to social structure. Though these periodisations tend to be rather sweeping, the argument does

illustrate the historical specificity of attacks on the morality of gambling and working class gambling in particular.[42]

One of these episodes which appears to be important in relation to the emerging trend of discriminatory legislation in the nineteenth century is worth dwelling on briefly. The 1845 Gaming Act is seen by a number of writers as a milestone in the history of gambling in Britain insofar as its symbolic effect can be interpreted as one which formally differentiated gambling from other forms of risky economic activity. This was accomplished through the effective removal of gambling transactions from the ambit of the law. Neither bettors nor layer were to have any recourse to the common or any other law in settling their disputes, except where fraud or other felonies were perchance involved. All gambling debts, in fact, were made unrecoverable at law. The law was thus elevated above gambling. Interestingly, as Vamplew (1976) notes, this was a posture anticipated by the Jockey Club some five years earlier.

This symbolic effect, however, had only a tenuous connection with the immediate protohistory of the Act and represented only a minor part of its explicit drafting. By the same token it is unlikely that this was, as Rubner (1966) argues, the first such Act wholly inspired by moral opposition to gambling. The Act was formally directed at the London gaming houses which had mushroomed at the time and were associated with various expressions of disorder which had reached the status of a public scandal. All this had been noted by the 1844 Select Committee on Gaming which in turn appears to have been a rationalisation for the earlier Gaming Actions Discontinuance Bill of 1844. However, as Vamplew (1976) relates, the latter was almost entirely a function of an episode in internal 'Turf' politics in which a revengeful Turf miscreant utilised some long forgotten clauses of the

Qui Tam Acts to cause embarrassment to leading aristocratic Turfites, creating political reverberations beyond the world of racing.[43] The leading potential victims were quick to use their influence to stop such actions with the 1844 Bill, the Select Committee was the required justification for such an intervention.

It is thus ironic that such a prosaic set of developments should crystallise in a profoundly symbolic piece of legislation. However, as Downes et al argue, to some extent the process of the social and economic differentiation of gambling was anticipated by the abolition of the Lotteries in 1823 which relieved 'City' institutions of the corrupting burden of managing the Lotteries. Be that as it may, the elevation of the law above gambling in this respect was a necessary condition for the following century of class discriminatory legislation on gambling.[44]

The mid-century explosion of working class betting which preceded the 1853 Betting Houses Act has already been discussed. This Act, however, made it an offence to resort to a place to bet though again, in practice, it was not to apply to the upper class betting clubs, most notably Tattersalls, on the wholly dubious rationalisation that bettors there did not hold a book against all comers. As with its counterpart fifty years later this legislation was explictly recognised at the time to be class biased (Downes et al, 1976; Dixon, 1979; McKibbin, 1979) and contributed one further instance of what Bailey has referred to as the "more intensive surveillance of everyday life" in the overall process of the disciplining of popular culture (1976, p. 84). From this beginning, attempts to suppress working class betting particularly in the last quarter of the century and especially at local level (Vamplew, 1978) increased apace, culminating in the 1906 Act which attempted to fill the accumulated loopholes in earlier legislation with a more (and over)

ambitious attack on the culture of the street.

As this process and the previous discussion of working class gambling broadly indicates, the intensity of enforcement did not always match the letter of the law, illiterate though that often turned out to be! As Downes et al argue, police ambivalence towards enforcing an unpopular law with limited powers and resources was sewn very early in the story of gambling control and later "Committees and Commissions were to express similar surprise and alarm at the reluctance and failure of the police to secure convictions against illegal gambling on anything other than a token scale", a consideration which would eventually weigh heavily in the legislation of cash betting (Downes et al, 1976, p. 33). The support given by local communities to their bookmakers who rather than the clients tended to be pursued by the police, made such a reluctance understandable and inevitable. It was also shown earlier that bookmakers were pretty adept at organisational innovation in response to changing legal-environmental conditions. The system of bookies' runners and agents developed in the wake of the Street Betting Act had reached such a peak that the 1923 Select Committee on Betting Duty was led to comment on the organisational perfection of the system. In this context token prosecutions were no more than normal costs of production for bookmakers. An amusing anecdote cited by Newman (1968) provides a motif for the ambiguity surrounding enforcement which continued until legislation: following an early 1930's Derby, a queue of people formed outside the residence of a local bookmaker in Bermondsey awaiting payment of their winnings, order in the queue was maintained by a uniformed constable who had also shared in the good fortune!

Vamplew (1976) suggests that by the time of the 1923 Committee, the futility of the supression of street betting was beginning to register in

official circles but legislation was a step too far for the Committee for which gambling implicitly continued to have undesirable moral and practical connotations.[45] The brief attempt to tax betting following the recommendations of the Committee is discussed in detail in Chapter Nine but whatever its other effects, it failed to unhinge the conventional view of cash betting which was effectively reaffirmed by the Royal Commission of 1932-3. There is a good deal of speculation both as to why the official position was overturned by the Commission of 49-51 and why the implementation of recommendations was delayed for a further decade and this issue will be touched upon in Chapter Nine.[46] However, the widespread assumption that the legalisation of cash betting off-course in 1960 represented a radical break with what Downes et al term 'Victorian legislation', though true, is overstated. Although the original intention to make it an offence to loiter in a betting shop was dropped, it is clear that the law which established betting shops and their modus operandi intended that they should not be places of sociability. The moral disapprobation implicitly accorded the betting shop continues to find more general resonances in official attitudes towards gambling, reflected for example in the terms of reference of the 1975 Royal Commission on Gambling, among which is a request to consider the potential contribution of the proceeds of gambling for supporting other, presumably more worthwhile, sporting activities. Clearly, however, the overall view is more pragmatic and as Downes et al argue, the objective of legislation is "no longer the formal suppression of gambling per se , but the calibration of social control mechanisms to prevent the unwanted side effects of poorly regulated gambling, and to forestall the commercial promotion of inducements to gamble". (1976, p. 42).

From this brief overview of legislative attempts to control gambling it is evident that for a century the weight of the law was directed downwards in

a fairly consistent and relentless pattern. Social control initiatives often tell more about the initiators than the 'controlled' but in very broad terms attempts to control working class betting do indicate the widespread nature of betting activity during this period. More importantly, however, it seems clear that these initiatives acted so as to cement the betting tradition within working class culture and to generate new and innovatory forms of organisation and participation. As McKibbin argues, mass betting thus became "the most successful example of working class self-help in the modern era". (McKibbin, 1979, p. 172).

Before moving to a discussion of the reasons and significance of betting in working class culture, it should also be noted that horse-racing per se has also played some role in working class recreation, a consideration to which we will now turn briefly.

Racing and Working Class Culture

The emphasis on the connection between betting and working class culture should not obscure the fact that historically there has also been a sustained, if light, engagement of working class people with racing per se. While the popularity of the activity has waxed and waned and while the dimensions of participation have changed considerably, there does appear to be one element of continuity in the nature of this association. For it is that for the most part, race meetings have provided an 'occasional' medium of recreation rather than a pattern of regular involvement. In other words, the visit to the races generated and retained a specialness. It became the focus of the 'day out', the exercusion and the outing rather than the 'everday' and 'close to home'. The seeds of this form of association were clearly sewn very early.

In the previous chapter, it was seen that the race meeting of the late

eighteenth century tended to be an annual event in a local social calendar, part of an overall traditional programme of seasonal events. The races were one event where the participation of the common people was tolerated rather than encouraged. Nevertheless, it provided one further occasion in which traditional hierachical relationships could be reaffirmed and the totality of local control displayed. These events were thus essentially local, occasional and the preserve of the patronage of the gentry and as such constituted what Vamplew (1976) has termed the 'social race meeting' (c.f. also Cunningham, 1980). The races then were intricately bound up with local and traditional holidays and in this they were also often implicated in conflicts over the emerging requirements of industrial time discipline mentioned earlier (Bailey, 1978). It also seems clear that the races retained this character well into the nineteenth century. Some meetings were, of course, less local than others. Historical accounts abound with anecdotes for example, of the mass exodus from the metropolis to the Epsom Derby meeting, of the working people of Sheffield making the not inconsiderable journey to Doncaster on foot, to witness the St. Leger meeting and of Mancunians removing themselves to Kersal Moor and so on (c.f. Vamplew, 1976; Walvin, 1978; Bailey, 1978). Indeed in the early nineteenth century it can be said that the races were already central to the notion of the English holiday. While material conditions hardly allowed otherwise, Vamplew argues that the London population preferred days out to holidays away from home. It would, however, be a mistake to ascribe this pattern of recreation solely to an intrinsic concern with the thoroughbred racehourse. Apart from the betting on the races themselves, the races offered a host of other attractions including gaming booths, side shows of all sorts, drink and so on. By the same token, they were often also riotous affairs and provided a haven for petty criminal activity (c.f. also Stedman Jones, 1976; Chesney, 1978).

The coming of the railways showed this association between the holiday and racing to be very well entrenched indeed. Most accounts indicate that the possibility of wider travel unleashed a tremendous attraction for the spectacle of racing and its attendant diversions. Middle class reformers hoped that the railways would provide an alternative attraction to the races but needless to say entrepreneurs took a more prosaic view of the possibilities of rail travel (Cunningham, 1980). Not uncommonly their foresight proved extremely profitable as city dwellers flocked to take advantage of the new facility. Vamplew reports that the first known race excursion took place in 1838 which makes such excursions virtually as old as commercial railways themselves. Some idea of the scale of the popularity of these events is given by Delves for example. Following the re-establishment of the races in Derby in 1845 (ironically, following pressure from rational recreationalists attempting to divert attention from the riotous street football) we learn that excursionists flocked to the two-day meeting there in numbers of twenty to thirty thousand! Delgado (1977) and Vamplew (1976) also note the popularity of rail excursions to the Epsom meeting. Hence Walvin (1978) can argue that the coming of the railways transformed horse-racing into the nation's first mass-spectator sport. The railways also had implications for the training of racehorses and the nature of the contests themselves at the meetings (Vamplew, 1976).

The middle decades of the century in fact witnessed a surge in the popularity of racing in the large urban areas where, especially in London, meetings proliferated at new venues under the patronage of local entrepreneurs rather than the accustomed elite (Cunningham, 1980). Bailey argues in fact that many big city meetings became almost exclusively proletarian occasions, interestingly, anticipating the patronage of town-based dog tracks in the 1920's. These initiatives, however, were relatively

short-lived, confronted as they were eventually by legislation (Racecourses Metropolis Act, 1879) in response to their supposed public nuisance. While innovatory and popular, these events remained wedded to the traditional pattern of racing through the purists of the Jockey Club would have winced at such a suggestion - insofar as they were 'unenclosed' meetings.

However, the relentless commercial pressures which gave rise to such initiatives finally found a more legitimate outlet in the invention of the enclosed racecourse in the last quarter of the century. This development marked the beginning of the end of the 'social' race meeting and heralded a number of significant developments in the organisation of racing. Courses which admitted race-goers only through the turnstiles of course depended, as Vamplew notes, on their ability to generate spectators. Crucial here for the finances of the racecourse companies was the contributions of working class people. Racing thus benefitted as did other increasingly commercialised entertainments from the increases in real wages among working class people in the latter half of the century. Competition for this new mass market for leisure, however, was intense and it appears clear that steps had to be taken to 'clean up' the Racing act if the allegiance of the now better-off sections of the working class was to be sustained. The enclosed course thus marked the beginning of a clamp down on the disreputable diversions usually associated with the race meeting. This of course could be more easily accomplished where access to the racecourse was controlled. This enabled 'rougher' elements to be excluded; it also enabled the racecourse companies to stratify the whole racecourse into different enclosures. Thus more effectively mollified, the crowd could turn its attention more singlemindedly to the racing.

Two further conditions were necessary for this to occur, however,

according to the author. Firstly, the potential for 'ugly scenes' in the crowd had to be dissipated by a more effective policing of the contests to ensure fair play and to guard against at least overt, corruption. Given that the customary diversions were gradually removed from the course, the racing itself and the betting on it, had to bear the weight of attracting spectators. Increased prize money, contests between better horses and more famous jockeys and more handicap and sprint races resulted. In practice the racecourse had proved itself more or less immune from legal intervention over betting and as we have seen this was enshrined in the 1906 Street Betting Act. There was therefore this very real attraction for attending a racecourse within easy reach. However, Vamplew argues that there was also a real interest among spectators in the racing per se and it is apparent that the fortunes of equine and jockey 'stars' were avidly followed beyond the contours of the racecourse. National feeling over the death of the champion jockey of the 1880's, Fred Archer, appears to have been superceded only by that of Queen Victoria. As McKibbin notes:

> "Archer's demented suicide in November 1886 led to demonstrations of mass feeling quite unprecedented in Victorian Britain."
>
> (1979, p. 174)

The more active attempts to attract the working class to racing thus had important effects for the organisation and cultural impact of the sport.

The intensity of this late nineteenth century love affair with racing failed to be sustained in the ensuing decades of the next century. As in other sports, there were rekindlings of former levels of attendance immediately afte the two World Wars. The overall trend, however, was for on course attendances to decline as other leisure activities competed for space and changes in particular took place in the nature of working class

holidays and much later in the legality of off course betting. All this took place in the face of a failure of racecourse managements to adapt to changing circumstances - a far cry from the strategies of their predecessors.

While racecourse attendances as a whole now seem to have stabilised following the period of post war decline[48], there appears little to suggest that the patterns of involvement moved away from the historical one of occasional attendance most often in the form of an 'out of the ordinary' outing. Working class involvement with racing per se indeed appears to have become diffuse and tenous, mediated only by the betting shop and extensive television coverage. It is therefore pertinent now to return to the question of gambling and working class culture.

Summary and Conclusions

While it is true that an intrinsic interest in racing and its role as a medium for holidays, excursions and recreation more generally, figures as a notable aspect of the role of racing in working class culture, it is, nevertheless, clear from the foregoing discussion that the betting connection has been by far the most important dimension in this respect. It has been shown that historically and contemporaneously, horserace betting has enjoyed an enduring, if changing status in working class life since the middle and later decades of the nineteenth century. It is therefore valid to talk of the existence of a betting tradition in the working class and one moreover which has customarily focused on an activity which in other respects represents a living antipathy to the conditions of working class life. It will be necessary to return to this point later, however, it is important at this juncture to briefly recall the significance of the notion of a betting tradition for an understanding of gambling behaviour.

The analysis of sociological and other approaches to understanding the phenomenon of gambling suggested that explanations of gambling which focused on general and universal motivational factors were unlikely to be very helpful for a number of reasons and that consequently there was a need to look at situational factors conducive to the participation of particular groups of individuals. The essential point here being that individuals do not gamble in the abstract or in a social vacuum; rather they are typically confronted by a range of possibilities, by opportunity and availability of different activities. It is important, in other words, to compute the supply factor into the equation as well as demand for some form of stimulation or other - for whatever reason. Hence the visibility, acceptability within specific social milieu, information about and availability, of different forms of stimulation are pivotal to the involvement of groups in gambling and in different forms of gambling in particular. For succeeding generations all these factors are idealised and crystallised in traditions of participation such as a betting tradition, such that they represent a given aspect of reality in which decisions and rationalities have become routinised and largely unproblematic. The existence of such a tradition centred around a particular activity indicates that over time it has proved to be an adequate response to certain needs and demands and has become institutionalised.

Of course, if one is to avoid an obvious circularity of argument, some consideration needs to be given to the origins of such a tradition and this has been touched upon in the historical discussion above. At this point, however, further considerations to emerge from the discussion of theories of gambling are extremely pertinent. It has been argued that situational factors are an essential ingredient in gambling participation but that these also need to be seen in the context of the different structural characteristics of forms of gambling and the possibilities and attractions which they thus may

provide. In recalling this point, however, it is also necessary to be mindful of the comments made earlier of the mediating effects of subjectivity in exploring structural characteristics. For a betting tradition to be established then it would seem necessary for there to be some correspondence between the life circumstances of people and the structural characteristics of an available form of gambling. It may be argued from what has been said already concerning the development of working class culture in the nineteenth century that there was indeed such a broad correspondence between horserace betting away from the racecourse and aspect of working class life at that time in mid-century and after, which witnessed a growing attachment of working class people with horserace betting.

Without attempting to caricature what were, as has been seen, subtle historical processes, a number of relevant observations may be made. Acknowledging that the manifestation of the full effects of capitalist industrialisation was a much later affair than commonly supposed, it nevertheless seems clear that by mid-century working class life was increasingly confronted by and subordinated to the requirements of capitalist production and all that this meant in terms of time and labour discipline and by the same token, recreation patterns and 'discipline', living conditions, urban living and so on. As many writers have argued, it would be a mistake to read into this a picture of complete acquiescence on the part of the waged labour to the emerging patterns of social relations. In particular, as Cunningham (1980) argues, it would be wrong to see in all this the complete destruction of traditional forms of leisure and recreation. Such a view would pose a sort of 'vacuum theory' of the development of leisure in which the Industrial Revolution is seen to erode traditional customs leaving a space for the injection of leisure activities ordained from above in the social structure. The preceeding discussion of working class culture gives little credence to

this view, indicating that many forms of popular culture continued in modified and re-created guises throughout the nineteenth century.

Nevertheless, it is also evident that working class life became increasingly 'crowded' in both literal, spatial and metaphorical terms, that the temporal and spatial constraints on traditional activities became increasingly difficult to resist and circumvent. Delves' (1981) study of the development of popular culture in early nineteenth century Derby neatly encapsulates processes described by many other writers. Delves shows how the antagonism generated among certain sections of the middle class against a particularly inclusive version of football popular with the lower orders, eventually led to its suppression; and how the autonomy of the 'street', a bastion of the emerging working class culture, became increasingly threatened and subject to surveillance by the police. Time and space, often the source of bitter struggle, were thus increasingly at a premium.

To put the matter succinctly, it may be supposed that any activity which allowed the possibility of participation, excitment, pre-occupation, recreation and so on, in ways which eluded the emerging constraints on time and space, however, vicarious the involvement, was bound to find some response in people among whom such resources were scarce. The provision of, if crude, off course horserace betting facilities by mid-century entrepreneurs found such a response. In eliciting it, help was given by two other factors. First, the prevailing status of race meetings as a fulcrum of local holidays and festivities meant that there was an existing fund, as it were, of goodwill and more importantly, information and familiarity about the intrinsic nature of the activity on which betting was offered. This therefore afforded an element of continuity to the emerging practice with older, traditional ways. Second, by mid-century a good deal of progress had

been made in cleaning up the discipline of racing itself and in ways which were public and conspicuous. There should be no mistake that at that time and for much of the following century, racing continued to allow woefully broad scope for sharp practice. Nevertheless, the 1830's and '40's had witnessed a concerted attempt chiefly under the inspiration and leadership of Lord George Bentinck to induce a semblance of order into racing and to rid the Turf of miscreants and defaulters. The persistence of racing scandals, most notably the infamous Running Rein Affair, indicated that the exercise still had a long way to go.[49] However, the improvements in the integrity and organisation of racing meant that to invest on the Turf could be considered as behaviour which increasingly stopped just short of lunacy.

However, it is necessary at this juncture to refer to the structural characteristics of gambling discussed earlier, to view ways in which horserace betting might have articulated with features of working class life. It can be assumed that the frequency of opportunities to bet and the payout interval likely to have been characteristic of the time, conspired to allow modest investment in terms of time resources. Somewhat perversely, the inevitably longer time gap between staking, determination and settlement may have served to heighten anticipation and vicarious excitment over a particular event. As noted earlier, it was often a matter of days before the result of a big race was known. Although the organisation of betting and the sophistication of services offered were bound to be low, the range of odds and stakes playable in this form of betting would have made it an attractive form to working class people of (if narrowly) varying means. Little is known about staking strategies in the late twentieth century let alone in the days of gambling proscription of a century before, but it is entirely conceivable that a number of types of play would have been available to punters in different circumstances and the ability to exercise choice may be assumed to

be one element in the attractiveness of the activity.

The empirical indeterminacy of racehorse betting is also significant in the context of increasingly proscribed and manipulated forms of leisure. As we have seen, this type of betting allows, if it does not predetermine, considerable space for the deployment of intellectual skills and capacities. The thirst for information on form and so on, evidenced by the phenomenal growth of the 'sporting' press in the third quarter of the century, to some extent reflects the perception of the cerebral nature of much betting activity. The privatised nature of betting then both rendered the time constraints of industrial work discipline of virtually no account and allowed for the vicarious satisfaction of a range of needs which became more difficult to express in other more overt and public ways.

The final point, of course, is that the probability of winning and the payout ratios even given dubious business conducted by many early bookmakers, were not altogether unfavourable. Huge windfalls in this form of gambling are rare as most punters realise, but as was suggested in earlier discussion, punters pursuing reasonably careful staking strategies are liable to some reinforcement. Hence while small stakes are unlikely to yield huge returns, even those with the most meagre of investments can from time to time expect a return. That this was probably a condition shared by the first generation of off course punters gives some indication of the monetary attractions of racehorse betting.

Of their nature, these claims are speculative but there do, nevertheless, appear to be some grounds for believing there to have been a certain congruity between the instrumental and expressive possibilities of off-course cash betting on racing offered by mid-century entrepreneurs and the life

conditions of their clientele sufficient to launch a tradition which was to endure for a considerable period of time.

The precise implications for class relations of this tradition are difficult to determine though the spin-offs for intra-class integration in the face of social control pressures, though marginal to the question of class solidarity, seem real enough. McKibbin (1979) argues that the role of gambling in the class structure was broadly neutral and can be said to have served neither to preserve nor to erode the social system. While it is true that gambling did, as has been seen, have contradictory implications this may be an overstatement of the case. Gambling was of little class significance, argues the author, because the gambling of the working and upper class were worlds apart. In general terms this is broadly true but as has been argued, reference to gambling in general is not always a useful starting point for analysis. Gambling patterns in terms of staking may have been quite different but both upper and working class gamblers were prone to focus their activity on the specific form of horserace betting thus exposing working class gamblers to a particular social milieu in a more positive way than their class situation and life circumstances might normally admit.

McKibbin reduces the possible significance of racing in these terms to the phenomenon of 'jockey workship' which, not surprisingly, is found on close examination to have rather ambivalent and marginal implications as jockeys were neither an embodiment of working class mobility nor of "the amiability of the British Class system" (1979, p. 175). This is undoubtedly true but the resonances of a phenomenon such as racing for class relations are bound to be more amorphous than is likely to be conveyed by something as specific as this example taken by McKibbin. It is much more likely that betting involvement will be conducive to a more generalised positive identification

with elite participants in the activity and a temporary suspension of more sceptical attitudes concerning a social structure which makes an activity such as racing, premissed as it is on the existence of concentrations of wealth, possible in its present form. However, in this, racing is one of a number of cultural practices which may have similar effects for the persistence of deferential sentiments. As McKibbin intimates though, it is rather more difficult to sustain such an argument than to criticise it.

That these possibilities have been opened up by a tradition of horserace betting which has endured for over a century is no guarantee that they will persist and thus contribute to cultural continuity and stability. Indeed in recent years a number of factors have served to place the betting tradition and the historical involvement of working class people with racing under strain. These can be seen as operating at two levels. First, there have been general developments in the sphere of leisure which have increased expressive possibilities for working class people. The second concerns developments in the world of bookmaking and the related politics of the Turf which are discussed in more detail in Chapter Nine. In brief, however, it may be argued that although the legalisation of off course cash betting unmasked the wide extent of the horserace betting tradition, it also provided the conditions for the more concerted development of other and existing alternative betting media. This potential did not begin to be taken up until the large bookmaking chains emerged at the beginning of the 1970's with their strategy of 'retailing' as applied to betting operations.[50] One aspect of this strategy is to provide as many alternative and regular betting media as possible for punters in the betting shop. Hence greyhound racing, traditionally an evening entertainment, has been extensively developed to attract day time betting shop punters.[51] Other forms of sport contest betting from the 'Boat Race' to the Football League Championship are also

routinely provided. The large bookmaking firms linked as they are now to Holding Companies with vast resources[52], have moved into the sphere of gaming and gaming provision in both the metropolis and the provinces.[53] As far as the latter is concerned, it seems clear that there are initiatives to provide gaming opportunities on a more accessible, low cost basis likely to prove attractive to more working class people.[54] The growth of the legalised gambling industry in the last decade or so has inevitably meant that commercial pressure to provide more alternative gambling media has increased.

The situation, peculiar to racing, whereby the proceeds of betting revenue, in addition to excise duty, are liable to hypothecation for the benefit of the racing industry has created pressures within the racing lobby to press for the maximum possible levy. The extent to which horserace betting is a form of 'value betting' is a matter of some debate, and the levy, effectively paid by the punter, is a small amount compared with excise duty.[55] However, to the extent that mandatory deductions from returns increasingly and unfavourably differentiate horserace from other forms of betting and gaming, then a move away from the historic association of the working class with horserace betting and with racing can be expected.[56]

In the following chapters attention is shifted to the internal world of racing which, it has been suggested, generates its own peculiar admixture of meanings and ambience which many followers of racing find attractive and to which others are exposed in a largely unproblematical way. Attention will be specifically focused on the racehorse training industry, traditionally the source of a great deal of mystique surrounding racing, and within this on the occupational role and work relations of the stable worker. By looking at racing from the inside out, and from the bottom up, it is intended to evoke

the peculiar meanings customarily associated with the total world of racing.

Notes

1. Cornish notes that many definitions demonstrate an "implicit ethical framework", (1978, p. 3).

2. Perjorative definitions of gambling by elite figures would fill a small volume (see Newman, 1972, for a sample). Modern political leaders from Washington, (despite his hypocritical patronage of his local race trace; Scott, 1968; Bolen, 1976) to Disraeli and from Churchill to Ramsay MacDonald, have found a unanimity in their view of gambling. Disraeli's view of gambling as a 'vast engine of demoralisation' provides a typical epithet for this position which is reflected in numerous literary works from Chaucer onwards (Rubner, 1966). Equally, it is difficult to exclude sociologists such as Thorstein Veblen and his discussion of the 'barbarian temperament' or the psycho-pathologists' thesis of gambling neurosis, from this moral genre.

3. Cornish (1978) has observed that in Britain, the continuing stigmata of gambling is reflected in the fact that recent surveys of leisure activities either fail to mention or only minimally report gambling activity, despite the more pragmatic official attitude towards gambling.

4. The obvious 'economic' parallel, of course, is with stock exchange dealings which were roughly interchangeable, morally speaking, in the eighteenth century (Fuller, 1977). Downes suggests that not until the 1845 Gaming Act was gambling differentiated from other forms of risk-taking. Devereux (1968) has also noted that people in the United States at least, are indeed well aware of the similarities between gambling and the modus operandi of the stock market.

5. In this account, to take one example, the monetary stake assumes a symbolic rather than a material importance, signifying a positive orientation on the part of the players, indicating that the play is irreversible and serious. This is an important but one-sided observation.

6. These are represented by activities and occupations where fatefulness - 'problematic consequentiality' - is self evidently apparent to the actors so that they must occasionally address themselves to the risks involved though the tendency is to normalise risk and reduce fatefulness through 'copings' and 'defences'. Goffman gives examples of risky commercial and industrial roles.

7. 'Consequentiality' is the term Goffman uses to denote what a given action will subsequently enable the subject to do or disqualify him or her from doing. The potential for loss and gain in the gamble is thus consequential.

8. Herman (1976a) also attempts to provide a set of such features by using Caillios' typology of game playing motives (alea, agon, mimicry, ilinx) in order to distinguish different types of gambling games. However, he does not relate such motives to the intrinsic features of the games themselves and thus the scheme is based on an intuitive estimation of the nature of the games. Whilst emphasising that different games allow for different motives, the simple imputation of motives begs the question, as the author implicitly acknowledges, by noting the problem of

subjective interpretation.

9. For example, to a limited extent the speed of roulette action is dependent on the skill of the croupier. Provision for off course cash betting on horse-racing provides, through access to several meetings simultaneously, the possibility of frequent action, but this also depends on the collusion of the racing authorities (see Chapter Nine). Otherwise opportunities to bet are restricted by the need to maintain the organisational integrity of the event. On the course this entails a thirty minute gap between races, a period which regulars find an impossible constraint, but which outsiders find interminable.

10. In the horserace betting for example, conscious attempts have been made to increase the range of bets routinely available. Bets such as 'yankees', 'accumulators', the 'I.T.V. Seven' and so on became increasingly commonplace and promoted as the large betting shop chains were more able to handle the often substantial liabilities involved in bets of this nature. This is because liabilities are routinely spread over a large number of outlets and betting events. From the bookmakers' point of view, multiple bets are more profitable than single bets.

11. To mention only one problem, such an exercise would have to allow for the range of different bets offered. For example, the actuarial risk involved in the long odds betting is greater than in betting at short odds. (Dowie, 1976; Cornish, 1978).

12. The concept of 'empirical indeterminacy' appears to have been coined first by Devereux (1949). See Downes et al (1976).

13. In this context both Cornish and Weinstein and Deitch offer the feature of the degree of personal participation or the element of skill involved. As will be evident from later discussion, this factor cannot be accepted in these terms because of the variability introduced by the subjective factor; degrees of participation and skill are phenomena responsive to subjective definition (see Note 14 below). Cornish mentions two other features of more dubious value: the association of gambling with other intrinsic attractions as in sports contests, for example; and the nature of monetary transaction. The relevance of associated activities is probably limited to the issue of legitimation and as long as the stake performs its role qua stake, its form seems unimportant though the question of cash versus credit raises the issue of the differential access of punters to gambling opportunities.

14. For example, while roulette is a game in which outcomes are entirely determined by chance, Oldman (1973) observed that players in his study, nevertheless interpreted the activity as one structured by a competitive struggle between themselves and the croupier. The game is acted upon as work to which considerations of skill may apply. The contention of the author then is that the labelling of a game of one of chance is not simply a matter of definition by fiat.

15. A detailed critique of so-called 'expectation' theories is provided by Cornish (1978). The attempt to introduce the subjective dimension in more sophisticated theories merely unleashed a nest of imponderables and further complicating factors. For example, Tsukahara and Brunn (1976) have argued that rational behaviour would need to be seen in the context of the overall resource allocation problem of the individual in which knowledge is a binding constraint.

16. For example, where the punter pays the bank to hold his money in return for occasional and unpredictable windfalls which are then directed into forms of consumption!

17. In his discussion of conspicuous consumption Veblen, of course, saw gambling in a different and more sophisticated light which arguably contradicts the 'universal' elements of his argument. Veblen's denunciation of the 'belief in luck' as an expression of the 'animistic expression of things' and its desultory effects on industry, as Downes et al, (1976), point out, blinds him to the uncomfortable fact of the 'luck' involved in the hereditary transfer of wealth in the process of capital accumulation.

18. Gambling losses, particularly in the more salubrious upper class watering holes could be seen as a form of display. As Kenneth Galbraith once observed, a few conspicuous losing punts on the Monte Carlo roulette wheel was often the sign that another wealthy American heiress was on the look-out for a not too impoverished European aristocrat.

19. At the formal level this analysis shares the standard weakness of structural functionalism but in a way which as Downes et al argue, belies the ritualistically repeated critique of this style of theorising. Newman (1972), however, has sought the fallacies of functionalist explanation in this context with some enthusiasm.

20. This account thus owes much to Weber's analysis of the 'protestant ethic' as Devereux (1968) acknowledges.

21. Similar arguments are deployed by Bloch (1951) and Fuller (1977) who argues for example, that in gambling the Christians found a:

> "convenient scapegoat onto which they could hive off the responsibility for the pernicious and really intolerable effects of capital's exploitation of labour".
>
> (1977, p. 64)

22. This type of argument has been used in other contexts (c.f. Parkin, 1967), and the factor of 'freedom from constraints' is, in a more prosaic form, utilised by Cornish (1978) in his important contribution to the debate.

23. Other factors would be group pressures to participate and the status associations of some gambling contexts, for example. It appears that in introducing 'environmental stimuli' into the analysis of gambling, Devereux is anticipating the criticism of teleology.

24. Scott's notion of the information game was discussed in Chapter One.

25. For Scott, the dynamics of gambling activity vitally include the generation of accounts to explain any given outcome in a way which further confirms the rationality of the exercise for the players. A variety of elaborate rationalisations are constructed to account for expected and unexpected outcomes. The regular players have generally overcome the 'uncertainty and structured ambiguity of horse-racing', making serious bets only in situations of subjective certainty, that is when not only is the player certain of the outcome of a given event,

but certain in that certainty! For Scott, the degree of orientation towards the information game can be taken as an index of the degree of involvement in the social world of horse-racing as constructed out of the accounts and rationalities of the participants.

26. Herman (1976) notes with some justification that these differences tend to be glossed over in functionalist accounts.

27. The problem here is whether working class culture is to be specific and indigenous to the working class as constituted under industrial capitalism or whether it may encompass other groups and epochs. In discussing the popular (as opposed to elite) culture of the early nineteenth century, Cunningham argues, "It cannot by any stretch of the historical imagination be described as working class culture", but nor was it a leftover from a pre-industrial past (1980, p. 38). Much of it was the invention of the Industrial Revolution and it was ubiquitous in the city and the country. In this view popular culture was much wider than the culture of the working class.

28. Delves (1981), for example, refers to 'working class popular culture' and Yeo (1981) uses the terms interchangeably.

29. A characteristic feature of the so-called new history is its concern to study the mass of the working class and the cultures of everyday life and not only the minorities of the working class or the institutionalised tradition of organised labour. In addition the issues of social and political relations between classes and a general concern with consciousness have been placed at the centre of concern (Johnson, 1979). This has also implied a critique of what are taken to be the 'static, segmentalist and determinist tendencies' of mainstream social history (Cunningham, 1980).

30. Joyce (1981) indeed has argued that spheres such as 'leisure' far from being discrete areas of experience, were only significant for class relations for example, insofar as they were part of the culture of the factory and work. On another level, it may be observed that it was not surprising that the attempts to foster class harmony through leisure broadly speaking failed, contradicted as they were by the systematic regeneration of antagonism at work.

31. Elite attempts to impose leisure reform and to reverse the privatisation of working class leisure in the guise of rational recreations, for example, were often transformed out of all recognition by the recipients (Bailey, 1976).

32. Interestingly, the original proposals for the legislation of cash betting which eventually occurred in 1960, also intended to make it an offence to loiter in betting offices. Happily for the bookmaking industry, this proposal was dropped, though the meagre facilities allowed to betting shops by the legislation gave little encouragement for people to stay in such places.

33. This idea was embodied in a common view of the 1960's that Britain was 'a nation of gamblers'. See Rubner (1966).

34. Although some individual bookmakers are disadvantaged by this assumption, the fact that the trade has not challenged the figure means that it is probably reasonably accurate.

35. Given the paucity of information for the pre-legislation era, i.e. before 1960, this claim is obviously speculative.

36. This argument is elaborated in Chapter Nine.

37. This raised an instance of a more general problem which lies beyond the scope of this thesis, concerning the origin of legislation. See Carson (1974).

38. Such an approach to class conflict would, as Dixon (1980) argues, tend to resolve into a radical pluralism which would pose interest groups as class formations.

39. The received wisdom on this legislation according to Dixon, implies that the Act was the outcome of successful pressure group activity by the National Anti-Gambling League. The author shows, however, that the contradictions and changes in the direction of the N.A.G.L. in its brief history before 1906, demonstrates that it reflected more deep-seated forces and interests; that it was reflective of rather than decisive in, the formation of the late nineteenth century gambling movement. In particular, defeat at the hands of the Law Lords (curiously susceptible to 'Turf' lobbying) forced the N.A.G.L. to deflect its critique from gambling per se, to working class gambling. This approach was enshrined in the terms of reference of the 1901 Select Committee on Gambling, formed as a result of the confusion generated by judgments concerning the legality of on-course racehorse betting. In fact, Dixon argues, in terms of the original aims of the League, the 1906 Act constituted something of a failure. The League had aligned itself with a wider anti-gambling movement, but in so doing was forced to compromise its original aims.

40. It seems that employers were more concerned about the time wasted on betting in work than with the morality of the activity per se which, conversely, tended to be the main focus of the professional middle class, the most severe of the critics of this aspect of working class culture.

41. These actions and counter-actions provoked by the N.A.G.L. to test the legality of on-course betting at race meetings. See McKibbin (1979, p. 47).

42. The earliest controls on gambling directed their attention at the literal interference of gambling with more highly esteemed pastimes which were closely linked to militaristic preparation. Then in the early eighteenth century the so-called Qui Tam Acts were evidently oriented to the excesses of upper-class gambling and the apparent desire to protect the dissolution of aristocratic fortunes (Rubner, 1966; Vamplew, 1976). Vamplew makes the amusing observation that the first Qui Tam Act in 1710 followed close on the heels of perhaps the first known betting coup of modern times. This was an episode in which the Royal trainer, Tregonwell Frampton, was hoisted by his own petard in attempting to disguise the true form of his horse which had been matched with that of a famous Yorkshire trainer. Large sums are reputed to have changed hands on the result. This legislation, however, had its difficulties. While it made losses paid over in a bet, in excess of a certain amount recoverable at law, it also made it illegal to make such a bet in the first place, making aggrieved punters liable to prosecution! In any event there is no evidence that the legislation had any effect on the upper class gambling mania of the period. The gambling fraternity was a

relatively closed society and developed its own norms for dealing with defaulters and so on.

43. On the Qui Tam Acts see the note above. One of those implicated was Lord George Bentinck, former steward of the Jockey Club and at the time a rising Ministerial star.

44. This is contentious but the removal of legal sanction from the contractual obligations of the gambling exchange arguably provided the space for repressing certain forms of gambling involvement. Inconsistencies in the law are, of course, not unknown but it would have been odd to penalise individuals for resorting to a place to bet or effectively for betting at all, if at the same time they could have resort to the common law for the recovery of gambling debts. However, the effect was probably more symbolic. By washing its hands of the regulation of gambling transactions in general, the law was then free to repress particular forms of gambling.

45. However, the beginnings of a more pragmatic attitude to gambling can be detected in the Select Committee Report.

46. Fuller (1977) for example, argues that the ruling class needed to encourage another animistic practice in the place of religion which was in decline!

47. More detailed observations of the performance of racecourse managements may be found in Horserace Betting Levy Board Third Report, 1965.

48. See the discussion in Chapter Nine.

49. The famous scandal in which a four year old 'ringer' won the Derby, a race for three year olds only.

50. These developments are discussed in some detail in Chapter Nine.

51. For example, bookmakers have sponsored daily greyhound meetings knowns as B.A.G.S. meetings (Boomakers Afternoon Greyhound Service).

52. See Chapter Nine.

53. Gaming in Britain effectively comprises two sectors: that based on the London Gaming Clubs which derive the overwhelming part of their income from wealthy (oil based) foreign punters; and that located in the larger cities in the provinces. The great bulk of the 'drop' in the gaming industry is derived from the London operations.

54. Anecdotal data on two of the large Glasgow casinos suggests a steady, youthful, working class element in the clientele. Oldman's study of an Aberdeen casino reported notable participation of entrepreneurial middle class elements. The existing fund of knowledge and information provided by the extensive Bingo Club network may also be predicted to support promoters' strategies in this area.

55. That is one in which punters appreciate the expected value of different bets and are thus sensitive to the effects of extraneous deductions from winnings.

56. The alternative possibility is that betting will be diverted 'underground' once again, but for reasons discussed in Chapter Nine, it seems very unlikely this will reach anywhere near the scale of the pre-1960 days.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRODUCTION TO THE RACING INDUSTRY AND RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The Racing Industry : Preliminary Remarks

In the following chapters, attention will focus on the nub of the racing industry, the social production of the racehorse. The study will attempt to elucidate the characteristic relationships of the industry and the meanings it generates and sustains to create the typically perceived ambience of racing. However, in order to provide a backcloth for this discussion, the present Chapter will make some preliminary comments on the logistics of racing and racehorse training. It will be evident from the detailed discussion in Chapter Nine that it is impossible to deal adequately with the political economy of racing without considering the role of the State, in the guise of the Horserace Betting Levy Board, and its articulation with the racing and betting industry. Nevertheless, some bare empirical information on economic aspects of racing will help provisionally, to contextualise the discussion of the following chapters. In the main, the data refer to the mid and later 1970's, that is, to the years running up to the period of field work in 1979.

Racing in Britain has two major wings, Flat Racing and National Hunt or Jump Racing. The former takes place between March and November and the latter occupies the winter months but with a season which lasts from August until June. There tend to be slightly more Flat horses than Jump horses in training. In April 1979 for example, there were 12,227 horses in training, of which 48% were defined by official 'Turf Statistics' as Flat horses, 38% were Jumpers and the balance designated as dual purpose horses.[1] Participants in

racing are prone to emphasise the differences between the two branches; jump racing is often portrayed as less instrumental, more concerned with the horse as an individual and with the spectacle of racing than the Flat. There is both an element of reality and romanticism in this, but the main practical difference is that to all intents and purposes there is no lucrative breeding industry awaiting the owners of successful Jump horses. Racehorse ownership is consumed directly with no expectation of a spin-off investment in breeding. The most a successful owner can hope for normally, is to offset capital depreciation and training costs, forlorn though that hope may be. Hence the view that followers of jump racing are more concerned with the intrinsic nature of the activity. However, the 'connections' of jumping horses seem no less ready to sell horses when faced with a favourable offer or indeed to be more reticent in the betting ring. While racing people have their preferences and there are certainly minor differences of empirical detail, from a sociological point of view the contrast in the two activities is minimal.[2] Until 1970, however, these two divisions of racing were controlled by separate if closely related bodies, the Jockey Club and National Hunt Committee respectively, which have now amalgamated under the Jockey Club.

At the risk of some oversimplification, overall the racing industry resembles a dual structure economy. On the one hand there is growing evidence of a form of monopolisation where in racehorse breeding, ownership and training, a relatively small and recurring number of people account for the most highly priced yearling bloodstock, the winners of the more prestigious races and the successfully syndicated stallions. The continuing element of chance involved in outcomes in racing means, however, that this circle is by no means closed or automatically self-reproducing. Production and consumption in the rest of industry, on the other hand, is on a smaller

scale where a large number of interests compete for a proportionately smaller share of the pickings. Within this sector, however, are a number of gradations which in breeding and training, for example, range from capitalistic oriented enterprises to forms of what amounts to no more than domestic production subsidised by other activities and income.

Before examining the data more sytematically, it will be instructive to offer two polar exemplars of this contrast. Indicative of the former trend is a group of owner breeders (which also patronises a few of the biggest trainers) headed most publicly by Mr. Robert Sangster who began to invest substantially in bloodstock in the early 1970's. Through syndicates comprised of wealthly men, often connected with the world of finance, Sangster was, by 1979, owner or part owner of 250 horses in training, mares, stallions and yearlings strategically placed around the racing world. By 1982, these figures had grown to 325 horses in training and 240 broodmares. To the two dozen or so important stallions owned by the group, 1982 saw the addition of the winners of the English and Irish Derbys which had been syndicated for $30,000,000 and $25,000,000, having been originally purchased for $750,000 and £16,000 respectively. In addition, considerable sums have been invested in a number of studs around the world, especially in America. The considerable prize money winnings of many of the horses in this empire are important in offsetting the running costs of the operation but the investment pay-off is in the value added to potential stallions and broodmares from the best lines which have showed acumen on the racecourse - and even to those which have not, provided they are related to the best lines as confirmed by racecourse performance.[3] The element of chance in both breeding and racing means that success in these terms is by no means automatic but the spreading of liabilities through syndicates and partnerships over a large number of good animals and the best blood lines in the hands of the most

successful trainers and jockeys reduces the odds against success considerably. Investment patterns of this sort inevitably send reverberations through the industry which is left to work with what remains. However, the continued success of this kind of operation will depend on the ability of these animals and their progeny to perform and on the willingness of lesser interests or purchase the less prized offspring of the group's bloodstock and so maintain the relative buoyancy of the yearling bloodstock market. This also depends in some measure on wider economic conditions and the effects on the spending preferences of the wealthy.

At the other end of the spectrum is a case of which the author is personally familiar, of a licensed national hunt trainer with two or three horses of his own and one or two belonging to acquaintances. The enterprise would be described more accurately as a pastime than a business. It depends for its continued existence on past revenues, low overheads, income from other and related sources, such as livery and petty bloodstock dealing and breeding, domestic, part-time and free labour, extensive involvement in the local informal economy for the provision of certain services and the occasional tilt at the betting ring in the face of the relatively poor levels of prize money available in this branch of the sport. While this is an extreme case it encapsulates many of the features characteristic of producers in national hunt racing, especially the importance of bloodstock dealing, economic informality, its pattern of labour exploitation and the dependence for all but a few, on a well timed punt.

Neither of these examples then is particularly representative of the total spectrum of racing interests but they are, in ideal typical terms, indicative of what is meant by a dual structure economy when applied to racing. It will now be instructive to briefly indicate relevant features of the major

branches of the activity in Britain, but bearing in mind the international nature of the operation at the top end of the business.

In 1979 there were 6,513 breeders in Great Britain, 10,621 thoroughbred mares and 4,552 live thoroughbred foals were born in the same year.[4] Statistics do not differentiate between stallions standing in Great Britain and Ireland which together totalled 1,147. These bare figures superficially indicate a heterogenous breeding industry, but this is misleading. For example, according to another authoritative estimate in 1976, there were 954 serving stallions in the United Kingdom but 85% of these covered fewer than five mares (compared with an optimum of around forty-five).[5] This means that the number of important or fashionable stallions accounts for probably less than 10% of the total which indicates a considerable degree of concentration in the provision of stallion services. A similar pattern emerges when the relative size of studs is compared, a contrast which also indicates the dual economy structure.

Table 15 Number of Mares per Stud and distribution of Mares in studs of each size, 1976

Stud Size/ No. of mares	No. of studs	%	No. of mares in such studs	%
1	4,467	62.5	4,467	38.1
2	1,021	14.2	2,042	17.4
3	369	5.2	1,107	9.4
4	223	3.1	892	7.6
5 - 10	281	3.9	1,821	15.6
11 - 20	61	0.9	945	8.1
21 - 40	14	0.2	397	3.4
41 - 50	1	-	45	0.4
Total	6,437	100	11,726	100

Source: M. MacCormack, The Irish Racing and Bloodstock Industry, p. 288

From this table it can be seen that the top 5% of studs in terms of size account for over 25% of all mares and that the top 1% account for over 10% of all mares at stud. For the overwhelming majority of breeders then, breeding is a form of domestic production. It may be supposed also that the top 5% of studs are those which have the most access to the more important of serving stallions.

The larger capitalistically oriented breeders, through their trade organisation, the Thoroughbred Breeders Associations, have been vociferous claimants for more prize money to be ploughed into racing. However, apart from 1974 when bloodstock prices slumped as a result of overproduction following the boom of the early '70's, the yearling market has held up well, particularly for the higher quality animal, a situation from which the larger enterprises have benefited relatively more. A perennial complaint has been of the high proportion of British bloodstock exported, 35% by volume as a proportion of annual production in 1975 for example.[6] Such a situation, it is argued, results from the inability of British owners to pay for such animals in competition with foreign buyers and a key factor in this is the low level of prize money available in this country. An important consequence, it is argued, is that the industry is unable to retain the best examples of blood lines and the quality of the British thoroughbred will fall. Such arguments have been an important factor in the politics of racing in recent years and is discussed in this light in Chapter Nine.

The number of registered owners increased steadily during the 1970's to a total figure of 16,257 in 1979.[7] The number of syndicates increased slightly but company registrations increased from 15 in 1975 to 600 in 1979. Of the registered owners actually running horses in 1979, the majority,

approximately two-thirds, had only one horse in training. No more than thirteen individual owners had more than twenty horses in training. A common and indeed indicative statistic which is deployed in relation to ownership, is the ratio of the amount of prize money available to the number of horses in training. The Benson Report (1968) suggested that owners should be able to recoup on average 50% of their training costs through the available pool of prize money. However, much to the chagrin of owners, the actual proportion has fallen a long way short of this target. In 1979, for example, there was £9,063,590 flat prize money available to owners of winners and placed horses (that is total prize money minus compulsory deductions). In the same year there were 5,238 flat horses and an additional 1,716 dual purpose horses. This means that there was £1,303 of prize money for each horse in training which can be compared with typical training fees for that year which can modestly be put at £3,000. National Hunt racing fares somewhat worse. Here there were 6,047 horses in training competing for prize money of £3,642,432, an average of £602 but with training fees of a lower order. Of course, prize money is nowhere near to being distributed equally and in practice there is a heavy concentration of winnings with the vast majority of horses winning little or no prize money for their owners. The Economist Intelligence Unit (1977) reported that 40% of flat horses and 64% of National Hunt Horses won £100 or less in 1976 and 87% and 94% respectively won less than £2,000. Using figures derived from Jockey Club statistics, MacCormack (978) has calculated that in 1976, if £2,500 is assumed to be the costs of training per horse, then only 7.9% of flat horses and 3.4% of jumping horses earned at least that sum in prize money.

By the same token, prize money accruing to individual owners is also highly skewed. Taking 1976 again, for example, the leading twelve flat-horse owners won a total £1,059,252 from win prize money out of a total

£3,709,171 available winning prize money. In other words, 0.21% of owners accounted for 28.5% of available winning prize money.

Table 16 Prize Money Winnings of Leading 12 Winning Owners 1976

Owners	Horses	Races Won	Races Value £
Mr. D. Wildenstein	5	10	244,500
Mr. C. D'Allessio	3	9	169,819
Mr. N. B. Hunt	5	6	123,384
Mr. J. Whitney	7	20	107,398
Mr. R. Sangster	8	11	84,109
Mr. C. F. Spence	1	4	53,342
Mr. G. Cambanis	2	5	52,437
Mr. C. St. George	9	13	49,977
Mr. H. J. Joel	15	29	45,789
Mr. R. Hollingsworth	5	11	45,463
Mr. G. Pope	3	8	43,889
William Hill Racing Ltd.	2	4	39,145
Total	65	130	1,059,252

Source: "Sporting Life", 9.11.76., Racing Industry Statistical Bureau, Statistics.

Interestingly, in view of the comments made earlier, at least nine of these individual owners are involved in owning and breeding syndicates with substantial bloodstock interests. The pattern is broadly similar for jump racing though the distribution of winnings amonst owners is far less skewed[9]. For the vast majority of owners then, ownership is a form of consumption.

These trends are also complemented by and reflected in, the fortunes of racehorse trainers of which there were a total of 949 in 1976 and 1,028 in 1979.[10] However, only 43% and 42% of these respectively may be regarded as professional trainers with full licenses to train publicly on the flat and for jumping or for jumping only. The remainder hold 'permits to train' which allow them to train only horses owned by themselves or members of their family. It is in this instance that training is most likely to resemble

domestic production. These permits are confined to National Hunt racing and almost certainly, holders are attracted by the intrinsic features of the activity.

Among the professional trainers on the flat, however, rewards are also highly skewed. The top twelve trainers in 1976 (3.5%) accounted for £1,857,203 (50%) of available winning prize money of £3,709,171. The Economist Intelligence Unit report argued that, in addition, the top ten trainers accounted for 33% of all Flat Race prize money (that is including place money). Again those top trainers are notable for their connection with the major owner breeders as well as their own patrons. These elite trainers are consequently oriented to the 'value added business' discussed earlier and as a rule have little to do with gambling though their prize money percentages are an important source of income.

Training yards are scattered throughout the country but there are a number of training centres and, generally speaking, this is where the larger and more successful enterprises are to be found. Foremost amongst these are Newmarket and Lambourn in the South of England but there are also concentrations of lesser stables at Malton and Middleham in Yorkshire and also at Epsom in Surrey.

The question of the size of training establishments is discussed more fully in the following chapters but on the whole they are small owner-manager enterprises. Using Jockey Club statistics, for example, MacCormack (1978) shows that only 15% of establishments had forty or more horses in training. At the bottom of this range this would entail the employment of no more than twenty people. Some yards are, of course, considerably bigger than this and these are more likely to be found in the

two major centres.

Table 17 Distribution of Training Establishments in terms of the Number of Horses in Training

No. of horses	Number of Training Establishments			
	1975	% of Total	1976	% of Total
1-10	92	23	99	25
11-15	80	20	90	23
16-20	74	19	60	15
21-30	57	15	58	15
31-40	26	7	27	7
40+	62	16	55	15
Total*	391	100	389	100

*Excluding Permit Holders

Source: Adapted from M. MacCormack (1978), table 203, p. 313.

Champions of the racing industry are prone to argue that racing provides a considerable amount of employment. This claim is supported by the sleight of hand of including employment in the betting industry which would account for at least three-quarters of the usual total employment figure which is mentioned of 100,000. The Horseracing Industry Joint Submission to the 1978 Royal Commission, for example, estimated employment in the betting industry to be in the region of 78,000 and in breeding and racing to be 22,000. The latter figure includes a whole range of occupations ancilliary to racing,for example, insurance, transport, media and so on. The number of people employed in racing stables is thus considerably less than this figure. Jockey Club statistics for 1979, the year of the fieldwork show that a total of 4,394 people were employed full time in the training sector.[12] This figure includes those employed by 'permit holders' and job categories such as secretary, hostel employee, cook, assistant trainer, and pupil, for example.

A more accurate impression is given by the number of full time employees holding 'horse attendant passes' which allows the holders to enter secure racecourse stables. These were 4,135 of these in 1979, 2,724 of these (65.9%) were employed by licensed trainers, the remainder by permit holders. Incidentally, as there were 599 permit holders in 1979 and those employed full time by them with 'horse attendant passes' numbered 1,566, permit holders had an average staff of 2.6 of such employees. This tends to support the attribution of 'domestic production' to this sector of the industry. However, almost 1,000 people are employed part-time in the industry, proportionately more of them by permit holders.

This data indicates the relatively small scale of employment directly connected with horserace training stables which is the focus of the following empirical study. Further comments on the structure of employment are made in the following section in connection with the sample for the study.

Methodological Procedures

The following empirical study is based upon fieldwork carried out in the first nine months of 1979 in Newmarket. As the 'headquarters' of British racing, Newmarket was chosen as the site for the study and although it would have been desirable to contrast Newmarket with another racing centre time and resource restraints made this unfeasible.

The data was derived from two major sources. First, observational data accrued from my living in the community for a good part of this time and, thanks to the hospitality of the warden, from being virtually based at the New Astley Stable Lads Club in Newmarket. The latter, together with the numerous public houses in the town which fortunately play a central role in the occupational sociability of the stable worker, provided numerous informal

coversations and entrees to stables which were not formally included in the sample survey (see below). My visits to stables to interview respondents also customarily resulted in an invitation (from the respondent) to observe evening stables in particular. Field notes were written up after such occasions. During these visits it was explictly known that I was a researcher and at no time did I attempt to conceal my identity. Despite the great emphasis on security in racing, I found myself able to wander in and out of stables where contacts had been made almost at will. On only one occasion was I challenged by an employer and this resulted in a further conducted tour and informal interview. I was also helped considerably in establishing rapport by my experience as an observing participant in racing as nine months before the fieldwork I had begun to ride out on a voluntary basis in a small National Hunt Stable. However, this experience plays no part in the following except where explictly stated in the text.

Second, a small-scale sample survey of stable workers provided a good deal of useful quantitative and qualitative material. It was intended initially to devise a statistically representative sample of stable workers in Newmarket using a sample frame derived from the Jockey Club's register of stable employees. However, the Jockey Club were unable to cooperate in this and it then became necessary to rely on employers to supply lists of employees' names. Letters explaining the nature of the survey were sent to the then thirty-eight Newmarket trainers. Of these fifteen replied with lists of names and in most cases addresses of employees. Subsequent experience showed that a more direct approach to trainers would have been beneficial as it became evident that the lack of response was due to administrative loads rather than hostility to the project. Only one trainer explictly refused to cooperate in the study. The trainers who cooperated thus were not necessarily the 'good' or 'bad' employers. In fact, they included employers

with both positive and negative reputations in the town. The trainers were also well spread in terms of size of yard measured in terms of the number of horses in training. They included one of the three trainers with more than one hundred horses in training, four of the nine with between 50 and 80 horses, eight of the twenty with between twenty and fifty and two of the six with less than twenty.

This procedure produced a population of 241 individuals. It was estimated at the time that this figure would have accounted for approaching 50% of those employed full time in racing stables aged eighteen and over in Newmarket. In broad terms this assumption was supported by employment census data for the area which was obtained in 1983. This showed that in 1978, the year before the fieldwork and the last year for which information is available, 750 people were employed in some capacity or other in racing stables (see Chapter Five, Table 20). However, this figure includes part-time workers, those under the age of eighteen, domestic and secretarial staff, that is, categories excluded from the survey population. When allowances are made for these, the survey population approximates much more closely to half of the available direct racing workforce.

As considerations of statistical representativeness were already precluded, it was decided to aim for in the region of a 25% sample of the population of 241. In all eighty-four individuals were randomly selected and contacted and interviews were obtained with fifty-eight subjects, a response rate of 69%. Considering the floating nature of the population which is commented extensively upon in the discussion, this may be seen as a reasonable response rate. Equally, the insular nature of the occupational community might have been expected to aid a higher rate of responses. For personal logistical reasons, the interviews were carried out in two waves over a six month

period. The lists were arranged alphabetically and an initial one in five individuals selected for interview. Fifty-one respondents were contacted and of these forty-two were finally interviewed. Three subjects refused to be interviewed, two were definitely known to have left the yard and four proved impossible to trace. In the second wave, thirty-three subjects were contacted on the same basis from the remaining population and of these sixteen were finally interviewed. Of the non-respondents, five were definitely known to have moved on and it is more than likely that the majority of the remainder were in the same category as five months had elapsed since the sampling information was obtained, with the ingrained job mobility of the stable worker taking its toll of the sampling frame. The two waves thus produced a sample of 58 individuals (42 + 16), a fraction less than 25% of the survey population.

The interviews followed the path of the interview schedule reproduced in Appendix 1. The schedule was developed with the help of pilot interviews undertaken in the summer of 1978 with ten stable workers who were members of a particular social club. A broad coding schedule was included in the interview schedule to aid recall but the interviews which were tape recorded were coded on a schedule which was further refined after the first dozen interviews. The remaining interviews were coded as soon as practicable after the interview.

The interviews were thus structured but fairly open-ended and respondents were encouraged to give their views a full airing. If a respondent broached a subject out of order, that discussion was encouraged and then returned to as the interview proceeded through the schedule. All interviews took place outside of work time in the homes or accommodation of the respondent. One, however, took place in the odd location of the

author's motor car. Interviews lasted typically about one and a half hours, some were shorter but a good deal were considerably longer. One, for example, lasted from 9.00 p.m. until 2.00 a.m!

Most subjects found it odd that anyone should be interested in them as stable workers and it was clear that for many, the interview constituted an important experience from the point of view of self-esteem. This probably encouraged a favourable disposition towards the interview which contained some sensitive questions vis-a-vis 'self' conceptions. In any event, no respondent attempted to curtail the interview once started. The respondents did vary somewhat in levels of articulateness and this was probably connected with the fact that, on the whole, the sample (as is the population as a whole) was a relatively young one. Other conversations were held and tape recorded with individuals who volunteered information during the course of the fieldwork. While these were often useful informants, they are not referred to in the data discussed, except where explictly stated.

While the sample is not statistically representative and probably contains a bias towards the more occupationally stable members of the workforce (but even these as the data show were still very mobile), it is by no means a self-selected sample and is probably broadly representative. Strictly speaking, it falls somewhere between a properly random sample and what Bulmer (1977) terms an 'accidental' sample.

Two further considerations on the representativness of the sample should be mentioned: one positive and the other more negative. Firstly, the representativeness of the sample may be gauged from the age distribution of the respondents which closely resembled that of the racing workforce as a whole as calculated by official sources (which were first published in 1980).

Table 18 Comparison of Age Distribution of Racing Stable Workforce and the Newmarket Sample (1979) aged 18-65

Stable Employees as a Whole		Newmarket Sample	
18 - 19	15.1	18 - 20	20.7
20 - 24	28.4	21 - 24	15.5
25 - 29	16.6	25 - 29	20.7
30 - 39	20.1	30 - 39	22.4
40 - 49	12.0	40 - 49	13.8
50 - 65	7.8	50 - 65	6.9
	100.0		100.0

Source: Adapted from Racing Industry Statistical Bureau, Statistics 1975-80 (1980), table H.3, Stable Employees by Age Group. This table also contains information for those under 18 and over 65. These have been excluded here to ease comparison and the percentages adjusted accordingly. This table also includes part-time workers which are excluded from the Newmarket sample which also included only workers aged 18 and over. The age categories for the Newmarket sample were constructed before the official figures for the industry as a whole became available. The latter used slightly different categories for the two youngest groups

While the age groups are not exactly comparable, the Table shows a broadly similar distribution. Both agree that the bulge occurs in the 20's, but differ in that the official figures show it to be in the early 20's rather than the latter. This is partly due to the categorisation of the two youngest groups which, as can be seen, overlap by one year. The remaining difference is likely to reflect a genuine difference in that one might expect in the premier racing centre more younger people remaining in the industry for longer. In any event the tables show that racing is a young person's occupation and this in all probability is related to life-cycle factors discussed more fully in Chapter Six. Nevertheless, the comparison gives some support for the view that the Newmarket sample was reasonably representative of the occupation in broad terms, though in any case the occupation in Newmarket is not offered as a limiting case.

There is, however, one respect in which the sample is not, in all likelihood, representative of the workforce in Newmarket and even less so more generally and that is the extent to which females are included. The sample threw up only six (10.3%) female stable 'lads'. In fact, this represents about one-quarter of the female employees who were available for sampling from the population of the study which included only twenty-two females in total. Although the population was not stratified by sex, the proportion of males and females sampled was similar (24% and 27% respectively). However, my own observations and experience suggested that the number of females sampled probably underestimated the number of females in full-time employment aged eighteen or above (the relevant criteria for inclusion in the population) in Newmarket. These impressions were broadly confirmed by 'official' figures which became available after the fieldwork was completed though, as will be suggested below, these need to be qualified somewhat. Weatherby's records of registered stable employees for the industry as a whole, published for the first time in 1980, showed the following distribution for 1979 (the year of the fieldwork).

Table 19 Registered Stable Employees 1979

	Male	Female	Total
Number in current employment	3,602	1,789	5,391
Number in full time current employment	3,090	1,304	4,394
Number in part time current employment	512	485	997
Employed full time with licensed trainers	2,075	649	2,724
Employed part time with licensed trainers	218	166	384
Employed full time with permit trainers	1,015	655	1,670
Employed part time with permit trainers	294	319	613

Source: Adapted from The Racing Industry Statistical Bureau, Statistics, 1980.

For the industry as a whole the figures show a ratio of two males to every female employed as a stable worker and a ratio of 2.4:1 in full time current

employment. However, these global figures tend to mask the distribution of males and females in different pockets of the industry. For example, as could be predicted from what is known about the sexual division of labour in general, relatively more females are employed part time than full time. Whereas one in six males is employed part time, the ratio for females is one in three. This difference is accentuated when attention is focused on the employees of licensed trainers who constitute the core of the training producers. Here, whereas only one in ten males are employed part time, the respective proportion for females is one in four.

It is also clear that relatively more females are employed by 'Permit Holders' than licensed trainers, that is females tend to be concentrated more heavily in what has been identified as the sphere of 'domestic production' in racing. Over half of all females in full time employment are employed by 'Permitted Trainers' compared with less than one-third for males. Overall this suggests that female employees, in the late 1970's at least, were more likely to be found in smaller establishments towards the periphery of the training industry rather than at the centre. This is consistent with the observation that the position of 'groom' in hunting and livery stables with which Permitted Trainers are traditionally associated, in the recent past has been a predominantly female one. This pattern suggests a diffusion of female labour into racing via this sphere in particular.

This may be important in the appreciation of the overall statistic that, according to these figures, 3.2 males to every female are employed full time by <u>licensed</u> trainers. Following the above reasoning, it might be predicted, notwithstanding this overall figure, that relatively fewer females would be found in the main training centres than in the more isolated and peripheral establishments, though of course absolute numbers could be larger. In other

words, it is possible that the feminisation of labour has reached higher levels at the periphery than at the centre. Although as we shall show, choice of labour is not the complete prerogative of the employer, the concentration of skilled male labour at the centre might offer a heavier constraint on female employment. Employment census data gives some qualified support for this assumption while also indicating that 'feminisation' has taken place to some degree at the centre. The data shows that although the absolute numbers of females employed in racing in Newmarket remained relatively constant over the decade previous to the study, the proportion of females to males had increased from 1:4.95 in 1969, to 1:3.66 in 1978 (see Chapter Five, Table 20). However, as the figures do not disaggregate full and part-time workers and given the national patterns discussed above, one would expect relatively fewer full-time female workers than male workers. The data therefore probably slightly exaggerates the concentration of female full-time workers.

Nevertheless it is clear, with the benefit of hindsight, that the sample under-represents female workers. Because of the small numbers involved, the females interviewed are not singled out for special attention in the discussion but the issue of 'feminisation' and the way it is handled in the occupational community is discussed later and indeed, is an important consideration in the question of forms of work control. These observations could be seen to lend some weight to the quite legitimate 'feminist' critique of industrial and organisational sociology in particular, which suggests that male observers have tended either to ignore completely female employees or to treat them as indistinguishable from males (inter alia, Brown, 1977; Wolff, 1977). This criticism applies to the following discussion only insofar as the data base restricted the scope for discussion of the full effects of 'feminisation' such as it is.

The following four chapters focus respectively on the production process in training, subjective dimensions of stable work, the occupational community of the racing lad and the issue of collectivism.

Notes

1. Unless otherwise stated, the data reported here is taken from the Racing Industry Statistical Bureau, Statistics 1975-79. (R.I.S.B.)

2. Khan (1980) has shown that there are some differences in the motivations of owners in the two branches.

3. In 1982, for example, Sangster and his associates sold a colt called 'Pilgrim' for $4 million. By common consent this was an extremely moderate animal but he was also a son of 'Northern Dancer', the most influential stallion of the era and a full brother to 'Minstrel', the winner of the English Derby in 1977.

4. R.I.S.B. Statistics 1975-79, p. A1.

5. M. MacCormack (1978)

6. Submission of the Thoroughbred Breeders Association to the Royal Commission on Gambling 1978.

7. R.S.I.B. Statistics 1975-79, p. B1.

8. As few stables are limited companies, training fees are difficult to gauge correctly. It is generally agreed, however, that fees in National Hunt racing tend to be lower.

9. The Economist Intelligence Unit Report calculated that the most successful twelve owners of jumpers accounted for only 12.4% of jumping win prize money.

10. R.S.I.B. Statistics 1975-79, p. C1.

11. R.S.I.B. Statistics 1975-79, p. H1. The system of registration of employees in racing (it is an offence under the rules of racing to employ a person without registration) means that these figures are given to accuracy.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF THE THOROUGHBRED RACEHORSE

Introduction

The process of transforming horseflesh into a racing thoroughbred requires the contribution of a number of different groups and skills. In this and following chapters, however, attention will focus on racehorse training and this will be explored through the medium of the occupational role of the Newmarket stable workers or racing lads who, in many ways, constitute the core of this complex process.[1] Observation and interview data will be called upon in first describing the work of the stable lad and in pointing to significant changes in the nature of this work in the recent past. Such changes may be seen as related to factors operating at both the local level and at the more general level of the political economy of racing as a whole.[2] It will also be necessary to situate this work role within the organisational structure such as it is, of the training establishment in order to elaborate the nature of workplace relationships and patterns of control. This will not only serve as an essential backcloth for the subsequent discussion of the racing lad's commitment and attachment to work and to racing but in itself will help to define some important fragments of racing culture as a whole.

However, work is perhaps a strange word to use to describe what the stable worker does, for it is an activity which frequently brings moments of extreme exhilaration, a deep sense of satisfaction and often a profound sense of achievement. As the voluminous literature on job satisfaction indicates, these are not attributes which many workers can boast in their employment.

Yet while the work is not felt to be 'hard' work physically, it clearly takes place under conditions of 'labour' and exploitation.[3] The social and material conditions of 'labour' for the racing lad are productive of real feelings of injustice, frustration, material and status deprivation and often, personal regret. The peaks and troughs of the work experience of the racing lad as for most participants in the racing business, tend to be wider than those experienced by most workers. For within certain parameters, racing allows for often sudden and unpredictable swings in fortune. A lad can be a promising apprentice at one moment but then an injury or a petty row in the 'yard' may propel him to the graveyard of forgotten men. The relaxed enjoyment of 'riding out' in the summer is all too quickly replaced by the irritability, tedium and tension of midwinter. An encouraging start to the season can, as many yards have testified in recent years, be jeopardised by the 'virus' entailing no runners or racing, no work riding, merely 'killing time'. The kudos of 'leading up' a winner at a prestigious racecourse such as Ascot one day may be quickly dissipated following an abortive outing to Wolverhampton the next.

The situation of oscillation tends, as we shall see, to evoke mixed feelings in the workers about their jobs. The minor eruptions of unrest which have periodically occurred also indicate the latent frustration which seem to have been a continuous feature of work in racing. There is some reason to believe, however, that this latter syndrome has become even more acute in the recent past with developments in the organisation of work which have tended to vaporise much of the craft and craft knowledge element involved in the work. To use a popular if problematic phrase, the job appears to be in the process of being 'deskilled'. This process also appears to be related to a certain amount of generational tension as older lads, socialised in the 'old ways' see, or believe they see, the job being undermined

with (though not necessarily by) the younger generation of lads and increasing preponderance of females. This adds a further complicating factor to the social consciousness of the occupation which is explored in more detail in subsequent chapters.

There is always a tendency for observers to overstate the extent and relevance of the changes which they appear to be witnessing but there is some justification for believing that the last decade has been a watershed for change in this as in other aspects of the racing business. In the present context the main effect on the ground has been an intensification of the work process and a simultaneous dilution of traditional skills. It is appropriate at this juncture then to offer a bare description of the labour process in racehourse training.

The Labour Process

The concept of the 'labour process' has been rejuvenated in recent years with the resurgence of interest in the work of Marx and particularly Marxist political economy. This interest has become increasingly esoteric as attempts were made to come to terms with the nature of the labour process, and the application of other Marxist categories, under the conditions of monopoly capitalism. However, the term 'labour process' itself is a rather misleading one since it is inappropriate both to speak of 'the' labour process as opposed to labour processes; and to refer to the labour process in abstract, as labour processes in Marxist terms always occur under the concrete conditions of specific modes of production. Marx (1954) does talk, as a methodological ploy, about production 'in general' and so on but merely to highlight what is historically specific about capitalist production. Hence it is more accurate, if cumbersome, to speak of capitalist labour processes.

What, of course, distinguishes the capitalist production process in particular is the indissoluble unity of a labour process and a valorisation process; the creation of use values through the agency of labour purchased as labour power to produce surplus value. The labour process or labour processes under capitalism then, is haunted by relations of appropriation and exploitation and insofar as this use of labour represents the distinctive mode of appropriation of capitalist production, they are also marked by relations of domination. In purchasing labour power capital introduces the dimension of power into the labour process itself.

The labour process then is not a 'free' process, things are produced to be consumed but only insofar as, primarily, they produce a surplus which can also be realised in exchange in the market. Under capitalism the pressure is to continually extract more from less. In the conventional Marxist account of the development of the labour process, this was achieved in earlier stages of capitalism by the simple expedient - depending on the relative strength of labour and capital - of the intensification of labour and lengthening the duration of the working day. As capitalism developed the underlying 'purpose' of production was increasingly realised through the application of science and machine technology to the labour process, rendering workers as the 'objects' of the production process and making them dependent on the collective organisation of cooperative effort orchestrated by capital. In more formal terms, this realises a transition from the achievement of absolute, to absolute and relative surplus value and correspondingly propels the move from formal to real subordination of labour to capital.[4]

In his somewhat global argument Braverman (1974) claimed that the subsequent elaboration of this process gradually led to the deskilling of many different kinds of work; a cancer-like process which, in the twentieth

century, has infiltrated even the higher levels of the occupational structure. Braverman's development of some of these elementary Marxist ideas, ingenious and seminal as it was, is now regarded as somewhat simplistic, marred (as will be seen) by a number of conceptual and empirical errors. Nevertheless, Braverman adhered to the emphasis on the processual aspects of work and production which serve as a reminder of some other more neglected elements in Marx's discussion.[5]

Marx gave some weight - no doubt this is related to his ontological and humanistic prejudices - to the notion of the labour process as a process of transformation, use values are after all produced. In this there takes place both a transformation of nature and a transformation of man as he develops his social being through work according to those definite relations which man in society himself has created and under which work takes place.

The Marxist discussion is, of course, both internally and externally problematic as the recent debates in this area indicate.[6] However, the network of concepts of 'transformation', 'exploitation', 'valorisation', 'control' and 'domination', and on another level, 'deskilling', may be of some use in helping to unravel the nature of the social production of the racehorse, a process conventionally shrouded with mystique.

The object in the training process is the thoroughbred horse. The term 'thoroughbred' is almost a complete misnomer for it is the product of generations of calculative in-breeding from an initially, arguably vulgar hybrid. The tale of how supposedly three famous stallions of different breeds provided the genetic base for the modern thoroughbred has been told in hundreds of racing books.[7] It is not of direct concern here except in the respect that this product, the thoroughbred, is by virtue of this pattern of

breeding an animal which is entirely useless except for the purpose of running faster over respective distances than its like and, more importantly, is also a highly temperamental and often unpredictable creature. This has consequences for work with thoroughbreds of which more will be said later, namely, that it is often a dangerous experience and one which routinely generates tension and stress.

Thoroughbred horses take their official birthdays from 1st January of the year of their birth and typically enter a racing stable towards the end of their second official year, that is as yearlings. In practice this means that most will be eighteen months old or thereabouts at that time. At this stage the animal constitutes the raw material which must be transformed into a racing thoroughbred. However, some important functions will have been performed while the horse is still on the stud or at 'home'. From its earliest days the foal will be made used to being handled. It will normally also have been taught some basic 'manners' such as picking up its feet for inspection, cleaning, picking and greasing. Hence some aspects of the 'training' process will already have taken place. Rather sterile arguments may often be heard about the relative importance of the stud vis-a-vis the stable in the making of a racehorse in what is clearly an interdependent activity but few would deny the importance of this initial socialisation period. As one lad put it, for example:

> "... if they don't come up to par with their job (i.e. on the stud) then unless you can walk on water - you won't put it right, because if a horse has done badly as a foal you've got problems".

On some studs and usually those with a close connection with a particular training establishment, the yearlings may also be 'backed' and 'broken in'. However, the norm is for this take place at the racing yard itself where, as

part of this process, it will also be lunged and 'long reined' or 'driven' in order to develop its steering mechanisms.[8] This kind of activity is a relatively specialised one where the valued occupational trait of 'patience', which is discussed later, is at a premium. It also appears and is felt to be the case that this process has become much more hurried in recent years, while many lads can recall the time when this whole business could take up to perhaps six to seven weeks, it is not uncommon now to find horses broken and ridden away within three weeks. Individual animals can differ widely however, and much depends on how well they were handled as foals. This kind of development may be calculated to make past generations of trainers and lads 'turn in their graves' but also, rather more pertinently, it is liable to increase the risks involved in riding. Horses which have been inordinately hurried at this stage may develop 'bad mouths' and other poor and uneven responses to aids. However, this is a development which is difficult to quantify and demonstrate conclusively.

Thoroughbreds remain temperamental however careful the training but clearly this is a crucial time not only for the future performance and well-being of the animal but also for the safety of its future rider. Short cuts at this stage are likely to prove a false economy but there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that they may becoming the norm (Silver, 1974). There remains considerable variation however; some trainers allow more time than others, as one lad who regarded himself as a specialist with yearlings suggested:

> "Well that's one thing about the guv'nor, they're not all alike, these days they turn them out pretty sharpish, they're not going to run as two year olds or they might run at the back end ... we took all the time in the world with them fillies ... six or seven weeks, it done them the world of good by not pushing them. Fillies are very funny things - highly strung. You get a wrong breed or something like a Brigadier Gerard filly, a week to ten days is rushing it, from then it's going scatty. This man (the trainer) doesn't rush but

they're not all like that ... they can't afford to be".

The breaking is often delegated to more experienced lads with a particular enthusiasm or 'flair' for the job. While in these days there may be a greater degree of 'sympathetic psychology' involved in the breaking, it is still often a heavily physical business. It is, nevertheless, a skilled job in which there is literally no substitute for practised experience. This is a resource on which the important task of 'driving' also draws heavily.

It is essential then that the lunging, driving and breaking have been done with care and a certain amount of discipline has been instilled into the horse which thus can respond to the appropriate aids. However, much still depends at the point of production on the conduct of the lad towards the horse in its box in the normal course of the stable routine and during exercise in the subsequent weeks of mid-winter before the flat season begins. It is at this stage, just after breaking, that the rider can make or ruin a horse's still hardening mouth by clawing and pulling on the bit. This makes a horse gradually insensitive to subtle changes in pressure and movement administered through the bridal reins, at worst rendering it eventually 'unsteerable'. In the process the horse's inherent nervousness may be reinforced and before long the stable has what is colloquially termed a 'headcase' on its hands. The avoidance of such an outcome requires a high degree of skill, patience, confidence and self-consciousness on the part of the rider. For it has to be remembered that all this takes place at an inhospitable time of the year for riding young racehorses, an activity which normally evokes the most romantic of images.

The horses tend to be very 'fresh' or 'keen' as they are getting little strong exercise while at the same time they are receiving usually high

energy diets. Inexperienced in the ways of both the world of nature and the strange artefacts of man, they are more likely to shy at unfamiliar objects and as they are still relatively young animals, they are likely to retain some of their earlier juvenile and dreaded habits such as rearing up, for example. Indeed, the fear of an animal rearing and falling on its rider is one which evokes great empathy among stablemen (the author included!). All this takes place in the unfriendly environment of winter; high winds (which in Newmarket often arrive direct from Siberia), cold, frost and ice on the ground make things particularly difficult for both horse and rider. In these circumstances it takes an inordinate degree of nerve, conscientiousness and self-awareness to ride with a long, relaxed, yet sensitive rein, with firmness but not harshness, transforming exercise from a chore to an education. Such an intimidating atmosphere, naturally, often places servere strains on standards of horsemanship.

To varying degrees these difficulties apply to working the older horses, indeed the workers in National Hunt racing experience these environmental conditions as the norm for theirs is a largely winter activity. Personal experience testifies that winter roadwork (walking exercise on the roads) with even the most experienced of equine campaigners can be an extremely hazardous venture. Most workers will have experienced the unpleasant mixture of a rain-soaked exterior matched by the cold sweat from inner tension. In the wide open spaces of the Heath, teaching the horses to canter can also be fraught with difficulties and while older horses are often used to give a lead, the 'gibbing', wheeling and rearing of horses at the bottom of the canter are an unnerving commonplace.

The daily exercise is the process whereby the fat of the horse is turned into muscle, rendering the animal fit enough to use its innate ability. The

trainer's art, which is often shrouded in mysterious qualities such as 'knowing your horse', lies in bringing the horse smoothly to this point of fitness, which is indeed a matter of fine subjective judgement. It also involves keeping the animal at a peak for as long as necessary and then placing it in the appropriate contests. In fact, it is a commonplace in racing that a horse cannot be made to run faster than it naturally is able. If the scientific basis of this assertion is uncertain, it nevertheless appears to be a taken-for-granted assumption underlying the training process. Getting a horse fit however is not seen by most of the workers interviewed as an esoteric skill known only to a privileged few, as they themselves represent the medium through which this is achieved. Many consider it a task which they could, and do, accomplish; rather more deference is accorded the ability to place horses in the appropriate races which is generally considered to be the main skill involved in training.[9]

Galloping the horses in their strongest work is often and perhaps increasingly subject to greater specialisation as within the ranks of the bigger yards especially, there are 'professional' work jockeys, that is lads who may be given only one or two horses to look after and whose main contribution is to do the 'fast work', often virtually at racing speed. Professional jockeys retained by particular stables or with interests in particular mounts in forthcoming races, will also do a share of the 'work' riding. An experienced lad who can tell what he has 'between his legs' is an important asset to a trainer who can only see so much with his own eyes, though many trainers will pay only ritualistic attention to what is being related about a particular horse after work. In the less well-endowed yards most of the lads who are not too heavy (i.e. not in excess of around 9st 7lbs) may have a chance of riding strong work fairly regularly. However, as is discussed below, with the changing nature of the apprenticeship system and

apparent dilution of the occupation, it seems likely that the signs of greater specialisation heralding a more permanent division of labour between work jockeys and general riders and workers performing non-riding functions will become more evident.[10] Such a division of labour is already institutionalised in the United States, for example. (Scott, 1968). In this country it is also likely to intersect with a sexual division of labour as females are regarded as insufficiently strong to be competent work riders. Needless to say, as with rationalisations for sexual divisions in general, this is no more than a self-fulfilling prophecy.

While the riding is undoubtedly the quintessential technical part of the job, the demeanour of the lad towards the horse in the box is also important as far as the horse's temperament is concerned and hence may later affect the deportment of the horse in public, at a race meeting for example. In the everyday duties of 'mucking out' and 'dressing over', the lad often builds up a rapport with the horse, increasing its confidence as a trust relationship develops. In many cases, however, this is often a struggle in which the worker's patience is strained to the limit. While the animal will not normally need to be taught basic manners, many animals - both colts and fillies, will not be averse to attempts at removing chunks out of their lad's anatomy or jettisoning them forcefully from the box with the hind feet.

A stablelad literally needs to develop eyes in the back of the head. Much of the 'verballing' which takes place when a lad is working on a horse in a box needs to be understood in this context. Talking to the horse is a way of reassuring the animal and maintaining contact in a confined space, it is also a means of self-assurance in a potentially uncomfortable situation. It is also productive of a strong affective attachment between the lad and his horse. However, within a short space of time the lad will know his horse

well enough to anticipate its quirks and habits, taking little notice of playful attempts to nip and other apparently menacing behaviours such as picking up a hind foot as if about to lash out. Familiarity, of course, can breed contempt with often painful but salutary effects. At this point in the process the animal's temperament is of course capable of being altered for the worse. A kick in the ribs, a smack on the quarter with a fork handle and so on, can easily and surreptitiously be inflicted when tempers are frayed. This area of 'socialisation' can easily make or break an animal as a racing performer. In any event, it should be clear from this account that 'labour' performs essential functions in the transformation of the thoroughbred into a thoroughbred racehorse.

Everyday routines around the box and yard have always been a jumble of the menial and the technical: that is, of those tasks necessary for the well-being of the animal and those which were only necessary for the reaffirmation of the trainers unquestioned authority and the subordinate position of the worker. Interwoven with tasks orientated to maintaining hygiene and the condition of the animals were, and still are to a certain extent, a number of what are termed 'bullshit jobs' whose major function was disciplinary. They symbolised the social distance involved in the authority relationship and the required elements of deferential comportment. No better was this illustrated than by the practice of evening inspection when, in barracks-like fashion, the trainer would inspect each horse and box. In the box the litter would have to be picked off the floor and 'set fair', that is boxed in a corner as it it were a table, with the lads grooming kit and duster set out on the top. When the bed was laid out again the straw at the front edge might have to be 'twisted in', literally involving the lad on his hands and knees twisting the straw around a broom handle. White-gloved in some cases, the trainer might also run his hand over the horse's quarters or

back, signs of dust would entail another half hour's work on the horse until the trainer was satisfied. Other eccentricities are indicated by the remarks of one lad reporting an event on the Heath one day:

> "X's is near us and his string was coming out the other day and one of the lads came out and his horse had like a straw mark on its quarter, he had'nt sponged it or worked it out. Now X sent the lad back in just to get that straw mark out - well as (his trainer) said, it's ridiculous that - I mean as long as the horses are coming out at exercise and they're well and looked after, why worry over a little straw mark, it's something and nothing sort of thing".

As these remarks indicate, this kind of emphasis is more of an exception than the rule these days and there is no doubt that 'bullshit' is resented, especially in the changed market situation of the Newmarket lad, of which we will say a little more below. However, the taint of 'bullshit' also affected the status of other tasks which have a more substantial claim to the 'necessary' in the division of labour, especially for example, 'dressing over' the horse.[11] In a context where largely because of local market factors the social and economic basis of patriarchal and traditional authority is much weaker, many spurious and ritualistic tasks have evaporated; equally because of the extent to which paternalistic ritualism pervaded everyday work tasks, so has the 'respect' for other more properly technical tasks. It should be said, however, that tasks such as dressing over and grooming, or 'strapping over' which arguably are important in toning and maintaining condition, have had their significance and contribution eroded at least as effectively by the intensification of labour which has taken place in recent years. It is in this context that we can talk about 'deskilling', but first it is necessary to indicate the process of 'value creation' in the training business and the nature of the skills which have been discussed above.

Racehorse Training and Value Creation

Value creation in racehorse training has few conventional analogies and one is liable to fall prey to a number of semantic and conceptual traps in describing it. For one, it is arguable whether anything is produced at all in the process although it has been shown that the work process does involve a transformation and development of a natural object, the thoroughbred horse. Secondly, it is the case that racehorse training is in the main financed out of revenue, that is, out of the income and private surpluses generated elsewhere in the economy and additionally out of the taxable expenditure of mainly working class bettors which in part are channelled into prize money.[12] Thirdly, the object of the production process, the racehorse is not immediately realised in the market as it is placed in contests which are 'enjoyed' or 'consumed' by their owners and in which it is 'hoped' they may 'earn' prize money and enhanced value for breeding purposes. Less distinctively the object of production is not normally 'owned' by the employer in the typical training establishment who rather acts as a steward of a real object belonging to others. This is to mention only the most obviously peculiar facets of the 'economics' of racing.

However, insofar as the training process itself may be abstracted analytically from a number of kindred activities, some simple observations can be made. This means leaving out of consideration the availability of prize money, their cut of which enables many trainers to survive and others to have a very comfortable living. It also means ignoring the dealing in bloodstock which has traditionally provided trainers with an intermittent source of income. Assuming then that the trainer must live from the training process alone means that attention must be focused on his use of labour. In fact labour has been 'exploited' in a very straightforward and

transparent manner, albeit clouded by paternalism and traditionalist practices. The lad 'looked after' more horses generating 'X' revenue in training fees than were necessary to reproduce the equivalent value of his own wages. Historically this was two horses, enshrined in the phrase 'doing your two'.

Hence in contrast to many other jobs, when the racing lad exchanged his labour power for wages there was a definite expectation as to what that involved, though of course this would vary in different areas and was by no means sacrosanct. The employer like other hirers of labour, had the formal right to use the general 'capacity to labour' of the worker as he wished, but in practice it had been normatively established that it would be limited to certain obligations. Additional tasks were recognised as being 'extra' though this did not necessarily mean that it would be rewarded as such. However, employers were able to reap sufficient surplus labour from lads doing their two. This was aided by the routine super-exploitation of apprentices, which were widely seen as a source of cheap labour and who, in contrast to the 'board-wageman', were asked to perform any and every task required by the employer.[13] Stable finances were often 'explained' to the lad in the following way: the lad did one horse for himself (the lad's own wages), half for the horses (feed, bedding, etc.) and half for the stable (i.e. the employer).[14]

It should be clear from this and the description of the 'labour process' so far, that the scope for increasing the rate of surplus generation through the more extensive use of machine technology is for the most part not open to the racehorse trainer to anywhere near the same extent as it was for most capitalist manufacturers. Increased capitalisation in the form of the modern 'barn' type of yard certainly incorporates many labour saving devices and some trainers use 'hot walkers' for the exercise of some horses.[15] On the

whole though these devices have a limited effect on the labour process. Hence if the employer wishes to increase the 'productivity' of labour or alternatively if he is, for some reason, faced with labour shortage, he is liable to resort to an intensification of labour, quantitatively increasing the role expectations of labour (possibly reducing them qualitatively), and/or an increased division of labour. Both developments appear to have transpired in recent years.[16]

As was emphasised above, what has been described here is an abstracted situation insofar as in practice very few trainers, because of downward competitive pressure on training fees[17] could or do rely on training fees alone to generate their income. Most depend on a flow of winners and a good many more on backing their horses, that is on betting. Hence while competitive pressure would have the same effect, the more likely source of the developments above is the labour market situation.[18]

For most of the century the local labour market probably approximated more closely to a rural labour market which, as Newby (1977) argues, was usually a buyers' market for labour - though it would vary quite sharply between different areas according to the type of worker involved. In the present case, the situation would be accentuated by the steady flow of young recruits from urban and industrial areas. The availability of skilled labour of course will be affected by the wage rates in training and the availability of alternative employment. In Newmarket in the 1970's the terms of trade in the local labour market seem broadly to have turned against the employers. Many lads with family responsibilities who were unable to earn a respectable wage in racing seem to have been more readily soaked up by the growing light industry and demand for unskilled manual labour in the town and were thus lost to the racing labour pool. This gradually produced the so-called

'labour problem'.[19] However, the apparent shortage of skilled 'time-served' labour was also exacerbated by the number of horses in training in Newmarket which on the whole increased in this period, if somewhat staccatically.

Some evidence for these observations is provided by Table 20 using data derived from the Employment Census for the Newmarket area which was acquired some time after the fieldwork was completed. It will be evident that the figures need to be interpreted with some caution but some minimal observations can be made.

First, between 1969 and 1978 the stables' workforce declined in size by about 23%. The number of male workers dropped by 27% and whereas the number of females remained broadly the same, the proportion of females in the workforce increased from 20% to 27%. Raw employment figures, despite the beginnings of the general recession in the 1970's remained relatively stable and indeed show an overall increase, one mainly accounted for by an increase in female employment. Racing employment as a proportion of total employment in the area fell from over 10% in 1969/70 to just below 7% in 1978. Male employment in racing as a proportion of total male employment fell from 12.5% to 8.4% in the same period.

At the same time, though the year to year figures are erratic, there were 25% more horses in training in 1979 than there were ten years previously. It is true that there was an abrupt drop in the figures in the middle of the decade following the bloodstock boom of the early 1970's, but on balance the underlying trend seems to have been upwards, reflecting the national pattern. Official figures in respect of the latter date only from 1975 but show a slight increase until 1979. However, MacCormack (1978)

Table 20 Total Employment, Employment in Racing Stables and Horses in Training in Newmarket, 1969-79

Year	Employment in Racing(a)			Total Employment			Horses in Training in in Newmarket(b)	Horses in Training in (Flat) UK(c)
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female		
1969	970	807	163	9,541	6,428	3,113	1,279	n.a.
1970	1,045	871	174	10,174	6,908	3,777	1,415	-
1971	907	787	120	10,803	7,017	3,786	1,323	-
1972	948	812	136	11,192	7,458	3,734	1,441	-
1973	936	790	146	11,653	7,507	4,146	1,591	
1974	946	786	160	11,891	7,428	4,163	1,538	-
1975	852	702	150	11,120	6,976	4,144	1,364	5,721
1976	742	598	144	10,065	6,140	3,925	1,263	5,438
1977	702	554	148	10,494	6,537	3,957	1,369	5,701
1978	750	589	161	11,244	7,011	4,233	1,448	5,936
1979		n.a.			n.a.		1,728	6,024
1980		n.a.			n.a.		1,736	-

Source: Census of Employment E.R.II 1969-78, Figures for pre-1969 were not available, figures for 1978 were the last available. Newmarket Estates and Property Ltd.

Notes:

a. These figures indicate those employed in racing stables. This would include secretaries, cooks and so on would exclude the large numbers of people engaged in ancilliary services.

b. Horses in Training figures are disaggregated by month and show regular month by month variation; all the figures here are for the month of May when there tends to be the largest number of horses in training.

c. Reliable official statistics on total numbers of horses in training are available from 1975. Figures quoted here are for the Flat only, the most useful reference point nationally, as Newmarket caters overwhelmingly for Flat horses.

indicates that the number of 'Flat' horses in training in 1976 shows a 23% increase on the 1968 figure.[20]

Without over-stretching the data it seems reasonable to suggest that this combination of factors would have placed an irresistable pressure on the general norm of 'doing your two'. This situation is well-reflected in the perceptions of the stablemen, 79% of whom, for example, believed that the number of horses done by lads in the industry in the town had increased; 27% felt able to say that this process has occurred in their own yard to their knowledge. The majority of the lads interviewed (86.5%) were 'doing' at least three horses though there were one or two yards in the town well-known for the trainers' insistence on keeping to the old custom. To a certain extent this situation has been symbolically rationalised by the recently established national wage negotiation machinery in which the emphasis naturally has been on wages for hours. Interestingly, one respondent argued that this had also been one effect of the strike in 1975 - "if it were wages for hours, the trainer could ask you to do ten horses as long as you're finished on time". However, none of the respondents could put a finger exactly on the time when 'doing your two' came under threat though it was clear that it was a gradual and recent process. Further subjective data on this issue and on the labour market is discussed in the next chapter.

In any event riding out three lots or even only two but having three or more horses to look after (more, when lads and horses are away racing) has certain consequences for the way in which that work is done and it is at this juncture that we may begin to introduce the notion of 'deskilling'.

Changes in the Labour Process: Intensification and Deskilling

The concept of deskilling popularised by Braverman (1974) occupied something of a vogue in the sociology of work and the labour process in the later 70's. Braverman's thesis indeed provided a research programme which broke quite distinctively with the conventional concerns of industrial sociology (Nichols, 1980) and, it may be argued, with mainstream Marxism which had neglected the labour process for generations (Coombs, 1978). Little systematic work was needed, however, before a number of problematic strands became apparent in Braverman's formulation.

Many writers pointed to what Coombs (1978) has termed Braverman's insipient craft nostalgia. The nineteenth century craft ideal was romanticised not only in a value sense but in that the historical account was largely inaccurate; the pervasiveness of craft work was exaggerated and its significance misinterpreted (Coombs, 1978; Little, 1978; Cutler, 1978; Elgar, 1979). Braverman's attribution to Taylorism's catalytic significance in deskilling during the twentieth century and the discussion of Taylorism in general, also attracted a good deal of critical attention. The novelty of Taylorism (Nichols, 1980), its internal coherence (Wood and Kelly, 1978), its significance vis-a-vis other control structures (Friedman, 1977, 1978; Little, 1978; Palloix, 1978) and its source in monopoly capital in Braverman's account, have all been contested. Virtually every critical discussion of Braverman has mentioned the issue of working class resistance and class struggle in the labour process which was strangely neglected in Braverman's 'marxist' discussion (McKenzie, 1977; Elger, 1979; Nichols, 1980 inter alia). Other writers noted his unilinear conception of monopoly capital with its undialectical, crisis-free conception of 'accumulation' (Coombs, 1978; Elger, 1979) though Braverman was scarcely alone in this amongst Marxist writers. An observation particularly pertinent to the present context, as the later

discussion of paternalism will show, concerns the failure to see the need for cooperation and consensus as a dimension of the problem of capitalist control, a process which entails strategies which go beyond the workplace (Burawoy, 1978; Salaman and Littler, 1982).

These arguments have served to sharpen thinking in this area and therefore in this sense Braverman's study was more than vindicated. However, two further points in particular have some close relevance to the present discussion. The first of these concerns the relationship between accumulation and deskilling, the second concerns the notion of skill itself.

Elger (1979) has cogently argued, for example, that the thesis that there is an inherent impulsion in the capitalist labour process to deskill can only be maintained if discussion of control in the labour process is divorced from accumulation in all but the most general terms. Successive phases of accumulation may induce changes in the labour process which may not always require deskilling or the removal of craft controls. In some circumstances capital can make use of craft control to its advantage. Valorisation rather than deskilling is the basic impulsion and may entail intensification or rationalisation or productivity raising investment or some combination of these. Which of these prevails depends on the nature of the specific phase of accumulation. There is, in other words, no monotonic relation between accumulation and deskilling; deskilling may well be an option which certain employers or particular capitals can, or would prefer, to do without.

Such seems to be the case in relation to the training industry and the stableman's work. Few are quicker to bemoan the 'falling standard of labour' than the employers. However, it is a process which as a whole they have precipitated through the intensification of work rather than technical

rationalisation strategies entailing deskilling. Here it might be added that intensification and deskilling are not as Elger intimates, strict alternatives. As argued above, this situation has resulted partly from the changing local labour market situation and the inability of the employers to meet the real exchange value of local labour, factors largely outside of the control of racing employers.

Secondly, the notions of skill and thus 'deskilling' are value laden and inherently ambiquous concepts (More, 1980; Lee, 1981). For example, the term 'skill' conjures up the idea of craft but that term, as Braverman emphasised, also tends to include within its ambit the notion of 'control' as well as specialisation. The term craft also implied the possession not only of specific skills but of all-round craft knowledge of the process in which the craftsman is engaged. In his discussion for example, Braverman overestimates the craft element in the trades, which according to him, have been deskilled. Historical evidence suggests that many workers traditionally thought of as skilled tradesmen had high levels of manual dexterity but little all-round craft knowledge (More, 1978). Equally, while a simple social construction thesis of skill determination cannot be sustained, there were nevertheless many trades where deskilling was masked by the fact that some occupations were able to maintain craft control through strong organisation even after the evaporation of much of the specialised and esoteric nature of the work tasks.

The stableman's occupation also shares many outward characteristics of the 'craftsman' including traditionally a long apprenticeship. However, unlike the situation in some other 'crafts' the occupation had for generations been controlled by the employers. The employer's customary mode of authority was reinforced by the prevalence of traditionalism in the local labour market

(the employer, himself of course usually operated within a context of 'oligarchic patronage', Johnson, 1972). It was the trainers not the stablemen who controlled entry into the occupation. While an appropriate form for the transfer of skills and knowledge of the stablemen, the apprenticeship was more an instituationalised form of 'cheap labour' than a support for occupational exclusivity (c.f. More, 1980).[21]

Nevertheless, the skills of the racing lad obviously exhibit a degree of specialisation and a technical basis but are difficult to characterise. It seems clear that in the main they are skills in which manual dexterity and natural aptitudes play a large part. In the riding, for example, the most technical of the work tasks, there is a limit to what can be 'taught'. Beyond that, much depends on individual aptitudes in determining levels of competence. One can be taught good habits but not how to empathise with the movements of the animal; one can be tauqht the correct 'seat' but not balance, that is, how not to fall off! It is possible to learn how to change hands on the reins with different strides but developing a 'good pair of hands' which are able to transmit and receive subtle messages to and from the horse's mouth is an imperceptible and experience-based process which by no means every lad can expect to acquire. The technical skill of riding then cannot be acquired simply through formal instruction even though the socialisation into certain habits of horsemanship can only aid the process.

Many of the other tasks which relate primarily to horse-care are of a mundane nature such as mucking out, cleaning mangers and so on. Working with any animal in a confined space requires a degree of sensitivity but the knowledge needed, for example, to tie the horse up without endangering oneself or to muck out and lay a bed without pranging the horse with a pitchfork, is easily acquired. In addition there are elementary ground rules

to guide behaviour such as making the horse move rather than attempting to work around it, for example. Various aspects of grooming and dressing over need to be taught but they are mainly (surprisingly arduous) tasks in which patience and an even temperament play an important part, as contrary to common belief, racehorses do not particularly relish grooming, especially of a vigorous nature.

The experienced lad, however, in addition typically built up a body of empirically based knowledge in the field of veterinary care especially where feet and legs were concerned, in the 'art' of feeding racehorses and in the presentation of the horse and accompanying paraphernalia at the races, that is in 'travelling horses'. Hence the work role of the stable lad could be described as a composite one in which mundane and technical tasks were bound together by a wide ranging, diffuse, empirically based body of knowledge, acquired largely through practice and experience.

This discussion of the nature of the stableman's skill should allow us to be a little clearer about how the notion of deskilling may be applied to the racing lad's work. It has already been suggested that the increasing use of technological hardware is not especially relevant to this process and that, faced with either pressure on profitability or labour shortage, the employer will tend to resort to an intensification of labour, that is by requiring the same or a dwindling number of workers to perform more work, to produce more output, in this context to look after more horses. However, given the nature of the work, it is difficult to ensure that workers work harder and there is, in the event, a tacit understanding that the required output can only be met by reducing role expectations qualitatively. This means that the work is not deskilled in the sense that certain aspects become the province of a machine but that short cuts are taken, tasks become devalued in terms

of the importance and amount of time allocated to them, others become the province of a smaller section of the occupation heralding a greater division of labour and differentiation in the workforce. Elements of both processes appear to be emerging in the work of the racing lad. Workers themselves then will come to have a narrower range of skills and task-related knowledge and some aspects of the work itself become fragmented.

Insofar as deskilling is the appropriate term to use, the process appears to have been moving in two directions simultaneously. On the one hand a majority of workers increasingly perform a narrower range of tasks with lower levels of knowledge and discretion, and on the other hand, a smaller number of workers perform more specialised tasks with a higher degree of discretion. Fragmentation and specialisation may thus be working to disaggregate the traditional composite role of the racing lad. This also permits the use of more unskilled labour which from the 'craft' point of view adds the dimension of dilution to these processes.

It is not uncommon now for yards to employ men whose job is to do the bulk of the mucking out and general manual tasks about the yard and to employ specialist work riders for riding fast work, trial gallops and schooling with ordinary male and female lads performing general riding duties and looking after horses. This version of the division of labour has become institutionalised in the United States where training in the main takes place at the race-tracks.

However, it has also been suggested that some tasks such as dressing over, which at one time were considered a major and considerable duty, are now generally regarded much more perfunctorily and it may be that the only 'good' dressing over many horses receive is just before they are about to

race. This means that many of the intricate little manual skills developed while learning the 'art' of dressing are becoming lost for the majority of lads, skills such as pulling mains and tails, plaiting, producing check marks on the horse's quarters, for example.

In the main, these again were skills which were passed on during the apprenticeship which was almost entirely empirical in nature with learning by performance and imitation rather than formal instruction. However, it was usually the case that one man in the yard, often the head man, took charge of the apprentices' education. One lad recalled, for example, learning to 'bump' the saddle while trotting, with his head man running alongside the horse ready to wrap his knuckles with a crop if he mistimed a movement in the saddle, that is, rising instead of falling or vice-versa. As one of my respondents painfully recalled, similar punishment might be meted out for a lad who kept his hands high while riding instead of low down on the horse's neck. In any event, the rudiments of 'craft' were at least sustained by the apprenticeship.

However, the apprenticeship has also failed to escape the tendencies we have been discussing. Historically, the apprenticeship was ruthlessly exploited by employers and the indentures typically applied to the apprentice were almost feudal in their denial of many normal citizen rights.[22] Since 1977, the apprenticeship no longer involves a lad signing away five or six years of life, but takes the form of an annual contract. This development was precipitated by the Horserace Betting Levy Board whose activities are discussed in more detail in Chapter Nine. More importantly for the present discussion, it appears that much less time is now invested in the apprenticeship in transmitting general occupational skills and know-how. Increasingly, the apprenticeship is oriented to race riding where there is no

middle ground between success and failure.

However, even in respect of the recent past when the five year apprenticeship still operated, a frequent complaint among my respondents was that they had not been taught or had the opportunity to learn this or that particular skill, a view corroborated by older lads who were prone to note this decline in 'education'. There was a feeling that the frequent complaint from trainers and others about the standard of labour had to be seen in this context. Many of the older lads could recall, for example, not being allowed near a racehorse for three months when first entering the stable and having to learn the basics on the ponies and hacks. The experience of more recent recruits suggested that three weeks was a more representative acclimatisation period for their generation! For the current generation in addition, the apprenticeship is not the automatic 'rite de passage' that it was formerly. Increasingly it appears that only lads who initially show a real promise as a race-rider will be offered an apprentice contract. Very few of the young female workers who have entered the industry in increasing numbers in recent years as trainers have attempted to redress the 'labour problem', will find themselves in possession of a formal contract. Hence it may be that not even the shell of the apprenticeship will be available to the greater number of new recruits. Correspondingly, they are likely to receive less structured learning with the result that occupational skill becomes further diluted.[23]

This is what deskilling amounts to in this context and its immediate cause, mediated through the conveniently neutral and apparently technical problem of 'labour shortage' is the historical failure to remunerate workers at culturally defined minimum levels of wages in the context of growing opportunites for alternative employment. It seems likely that a 'ratchet

effect' will operate to make the processes described virtually irreversible, despite the predictable consequences of the recession of the 1980's in terms of both alternative employment and the supply of new labour.

The ideological response of employers is to bemoan such a situation, but it is not altogether against their short-term interests. It means that labour will remain relatively cheap and become more dispensable. In this the tendencies towards casualisation in the industry will be reinforced and by the same token any potential for collective organisation of the workforce is weakened.[24] It might be added at this point that the economic advantages to the employer are not lost on the workers who often wonder about the destination of the fees for the extra two horses they are now accustomed to 'doing'. To the typical stableman, for example, a £5 'bonus' does not make a great deal of sense when the remaining £65 or so (at prevailing 1979 rates) of the training fee is going to the trainer. However, it is an arrangement which goes largely unquestioned in the normal course of employer/employee relations.

The Workplace and Control

In the discussion so far allusion has been made to the pattern of domination or type of control relationships which characterises the social production of the racehorse in training. Predictably these are rather more complex than they might appear to be at first sight, particularly as this is also a feature of racing which has appeared in a state of flux in recent years. In his study of agricultural workers, Newby (1977) makes a useful distinction between patriarchal and bureaucratic modes of control. The 'patriarchal mode of control' is associated with the exercise of traditional forms of authority; that is where the exercise of authority is justified by tradition, and is characterised by particularistic and diffuse relationships between employer

and employee evoking deferential patterns of action. This typically involves the personal intervention of the employer in the organisation of work and a sustained orientation of paternalism toward the worker both inside and outside of work. The good employer, explains Newby further, "is one who extends his relationship with his workers beyong the wage bargain - an employer who cares". (1977a, p. 307). In this type of relationship much depends on the 'personal' loyality of the employee to his employer. The nature of this relationship helps to promote both a positive identification with the employer and means that conflict will more likely be interpreted as personality clashes than as indicative of basic conflicts of interest. Paternalism then reflects a cultivated and structured dependence of the worker on the employer, oriented to generating consensus in the workplace.

This pattern of subordination may be contrasted with the impersonal universalistic nature of the 'bureaucratic mode of control' where authority relations between employee and employer are mediated through organisational hierarchy and 'formalised' procedural rules with little or no direct employer intervention in the daily work process. At the root of the control structure is the cash nexus; the relationship between employer and employee is purely instrumental.

These two models are obviously styleised poles and represent ideal types rather than concrete descriptions. However, Newby argues that, paradoxically, changes in the organisation of agriculture have reinforced rather than, as in other sectors of the economy, eroded the pattern of traditional authority. The decline in the size of the farm labour force in particular among other developments has permitted the growth of closer, more personal and informal relationships between farmer and farm worker. He adds that while some large farming companies pursue the bureaucratic

mode of control, unashamedly operating on the basis of the cash nexus, many other farmers operating the bureaucratic model, nevertheless, also attempted to maintain the trappings and effect of traditional authority.

The position in racehorse training is somewhat, though not totally, analogous. Traditionalism in general has always been a feature of racing in Britain, and indeed has provided one of the principal attractions of racing as a chosen medium for the nouveaux riches - the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie.[25] Traditionalism and patriarchal control have correspondingly also been the modus operandi in the training industry surviving well past the mid-point of the century. However, the changes confronting the racing business have on the whole been subversive rather than as in agriculture, supportive of the persistence of traditional authority and have operated at different levels. The intrusion of the state in the guise of the Levy Board for example has undermined some of the traditional hegemony of the Jockey Club in racing and at the same time had bureaucratised certain aspects of the gift relationship, partly wresting it from the control of employers in the training business.[26] More important, however, have been changes in the market situation already discussed which have tended to undermine the economic supports of traditional authority (c.f. Norris, 1978). In addition, the movement of local economies away from particularism, as in Newmarket, creates some pressure on individual outfits to move in a more bureaucratic direction.

As Newby argues, traditional authority is most stable where the social structure is both small-scale and total and this is clearly affected for one by the extent of choice in employment available to employees. Hence it is related to the degree of dependence between employer and employee, for behind the gentle exterior of patriarchalism was always the stark reality of

economic power. For reasons already discussed, the relation of dependence has ceased, at least in this particular locality, to be completely one-sided. In effect, to use a colloquialism, 'the boot is on the other foot', insofar as it is now often the time-served stableman who can pick and choose.

Now this does not mean that employers will instinctively move towards bureaucratic modes of control, in fact they may attempt to increase their paternalistic output as they strive to retain their workforce or the most valued elements of it. This will be particularly evident for trainers isolated from the main training centre. However, it does indicate that the cash nexus is likely to become a more prominent feature of employment relationships with personal loyalty a much less obvious feature of the control relationship. This is illustrated to an extent by the job mobility patterns of many Newmarket stablemen. It will be shown in the next chapter, that they vote with their feet; paternalism does not operate with quite the gravitational pull it might once have been expected to.

The increasing employment of females in racing stables, however, somewhat complicates this process and may serve to reinforce the vestiges of traditional authority. This is because young females may be assumed to be more susceptible to the mechanisms and accoutrements of patriarchal control, praise, flattery, sexual intimidation and so on, that is, to accepting 'naturally' the authority of a controlling male. In some sectors of employment where patriarchialism, the traditional control of women by men, has been the norm such as in female clerical labour, patriarchal relations of control seem to be increasingly recognised as an inadequate and porous mechanism of control because of the space which it continues to allow subordinates (Barker and Downing, 1980). In racing, interestingly, the process seems to be in reverse. The influx of female employees provides the

possibility of maintaining a semblance of traditionalism in the specific form of the control of women by men. Also it has already been argued that the scope for mechanising the labour process in training is very limited. This is speculative, however, and requires more specific empirical research on the process of feminisation of the occupation.

However, the small scale of the labour force in even the largest of training outfits where, for example, a 100 horse string would be well endowed with 40 lads, means that the extent of organisational hierarchy remains short and relatively undifferentiated. In most yards the role of head lad is interposed between the workers and the trainer. One of the bigger yards in the study boasted several head men but equally one of at least comparable size had only an assistant trainer and a head lad, each of whom had responsibility for a given part of the stable (i.e. the 'top' and 'bottom' yard). Impressionistically, it appeared that the size of the labour force was not a very accurate guide as to how authority was mediated in the yards. In any event, in contrast to the situation described by Newby, the organisation of work in a stable is relatively concentrated and it is possible for the trainer to keep in close contact with his work force, indeed it is normally expected that he will ride out with at least his 'first lot'.[27] Hence 74% of the lads in the sample for example, claimed that they saw their employer to speak to at least once a day, a further 16%, more than once per day, exceptions being when he was away at sales or racing and so on. This showed no variation with the size of the yard. The spatial and physical organisation of work then is much more conducive to paternalistic impression management and may allow the employer to retain the trappings of traditionalism even where the basis of authority is shifting or has shifted to another dimension.

Hence it appears that it is necessary to make a distinction not only between modes of control but also between styles of control as it seems possible for employers to retain the style of traditionalism while the mode of control is rather more bureaucratic with a greater reliance on the cash nexus, producing what is indeed a confusing picture. To a certain extent this may account for the degree of ambivalence in racing lads in their perceived relations and attitudes towards their employers (to be discussed in the following chapter) where calculative and conditional loyalty is often tempered with particularism and personal respect for the employer. It should be said, however, that not all employers retain a traditionalist style. It was evident from my contact yards in the sample that the cash nexus unashamedly ruled in a small number. And, of course, some individual employers will pursue their own strategies, whichever way the tide is flowing.

However, recent research by Goffee and Scase (1982) has suggested an alternative mode of control, potentially of some relevance to the present context. The strategy of 'fraternalism' deployed by some small scale employers in the building industry, aims to develop the work organisation as "an organic partnership in a cooperative enterprise" (1982, p. 119), that is, to cultivate non-hierarchical differentiation despite ownership relations. This is an appropriate strategy in the context of the employer's dependence on indispensable workers, the nature of the work tasks and the instability of labour and product markets. In practice this frequently involves working alongside workers as fellow tradesmen, taking similar rewards except for end of year profits and business 'perks'; the avoidance of administration; an emphasis on team work; an indulgency pattern and careful recruitment.

There are likely to be some parallels here with racing especially away

from the main training centres. There have been a number of cases in recent years, for example, where ex-head lads have set up as trainers and fraternalism may well be adopted by some of these as the viability of their (initially) small scale operations may depend much more on their personal contribution to the routine workload. However, in general, fraternalism is unlikely to emerge as a major trend in the training industry. This is because the employer's manual labour is marginal to the sucess of the yard and because differences in wealth (reflected in the very investment of the stable for example) and life-style - the necessary socialising with wealthy clients and so on - will remain much more conspicuous in relations between employer and employee. Nevertheless, in practice, in very small scale outfits one might expect to see some amalgam of or oscillation between paternalism and fraternalism.

However, employers with relatively small scale operations as research on electronics and printing firms has shown are also perfectly capable of personally running their enterprises in a calculatively capitalistic and instrumental way (Curran and Stanworth, 1979). Indeed the pressures of their competitive situation often leave them little alternative.[28] This is a consideration which highlights a commonplace in discussions of the so-called 'size effect' that frequent interaction between employers and employees gives no indication of the quality of those relationships or even the meaningfulness of the interaction.[29] It might be added here that, as with Newby's study of agricultural work, size itself does not appear to be a very significant element structuring work and work relationships. As we have noted, racing stables are relatively small establishments in terms of the size of their labour forces although they often process bloodstock of staggering money value. There are, however, implicit notions of big and small at least among the employees and these generally refer to the number of horses in a yard.

However, these are not very consistent, for example, one lad interviewed referred to the 'big yards' from which he excluded his own yard even though on paper it ranked within the top half dozen of Newmarket yards in terms of the number of horses. The number of horses in a yard is also not a very informative guide in the sense that this still leaves considerable room for variation in the size of the labour force, for example, the fifth largest yard in my sample employed as many as did the largest, which at the time had approximately 100 horses training. On the whole though, the outfits are relatively small, certainly small enough to sustain the appearance of traditionalism even if the reality is rather more ambiguous.

Conclusion

The preceding analysis of the labour process in racehorse training confirms the salience of the emphasis of more recent literature in the area on the interpenetration of production and labour market processes for a fuller appreciation of control in work. The importance of paternalism as a control strategy was precisely its role in transcending these two processes. Among other factors, it was both dependent upon and oriented to the manipulation of, certain labour market conditions and in this sense it was a pattern of control anchored both inside and outside the workplace. Although it was not possible to provide extensive data on local labour market conditions, certain other relevant observations may be made on the basis of the foregoing discussion. First, the case of Newmarket racing employers shows that 'capital' or sectors of it, is by no means able to manipulate the labour market to the extent suggested by some recent neo-Marxist discussions.[30] For the Newmarket employers, labour market developments were both unwelcome and uncontrollable. Second, as a corrective to the determinism implicit in much of the deskilling debate, it is apparent that in racehorse training, deskilling (in the form discussed above) has not resulted from an

explicit strategy or need for control, but is a temporising, piecemeal, probably reluctant, response to intractable external conditions. However, the cumulative effects of this process may operate to create a self-fulfilling prophecy (the need for more control). It is also likely that these developments in the labour process are now irreversible whatever labour market conditions pertain in the future.

However, the focus here has been on developments as they appear in one particular locale, albeit the premier racing centre in Britain. Impressionistic and anecdotal information does suggest that the example offers, if a dramatic one, a representation of developments which will be familiar elsewhere. This is not to say that Newmarket offers a prototypical situation, it is not a limiting case in any strict sense. In only one other racing centre, Epsom in Surrey, is the pattern of labour market opportunities likely to resemble closely that of Newmarket. Nevertheless, while unique in some ways, it displays features which are likely to strike a chord in other areas. A good deal, however, will depend on the extent to which the supports of paternalism are eroded more generally. Norris (1978) has argued, for example, that industrial, paternalist capitalism is in decline as a number of supportive factors are progressively weakened. Among those relevant to the present discussion are the growth of national welfare provision and rising real incomes which enable increased journey lengths to work, which respectively reduce dependency on the local bourgeoisie and the local labour market; and the extension of the mass media into the home purveying the 'legitimating ideology of democratic capitalism' (1978, p. 484). It seems likely, however, that the important factor in relation to the other racing centres will be the extent of labour market domination which is probably heavier than Newmarket. However, the (Jockey Club) Blackwell Report

(1974) implied in its albeit cursory analysis, that the 'manpower problem' was also a feature of these other locations. Hence the processes described above are likely to be evident more generally.

However, it is against this background of changing labour market conditions, labour intensification, dilution, deskilling and a gradual erosion of traditionalism, that the complex attachment of the stable workers to their work, relations with employers and the spectrum of work-based ideology, needs to be viewed. Importantly, as with the foregoing discussion, the focus in the following chapters on the subjective dimension, will also indicate grounds for believing that the distinctive meanings and cultural output of racing which has traditionally attracted curiosity, interest and a benevolent wonderment from widely different groups in the social structure, are liable to evaporate as racing becomes a less obviously separate segment of business and leisure activity.

Notes

1. The occupational term for the stableworker is stablelad or racing lad and is applied to both male and female workers by participants in the industry. In one sense, of course, the use of these terms is inherently sexist. In another it is more libertarian in that the individual formal status is not a question of gender. Further comments are made on this issue in the discussion of the occupational community. In the text an attempt is made to avoid a sexist use of the terms.

2. In addition to the trends noted in the previous chapter, the political economy of racing is discussed in more detail in Chapter Nine.

3. The duality in the meaning of labour is commented upon by Nichols (1980).

4. The significance of the concepts of formal and real subordination are themselves the subject of some debate in Marxist circles (c.f. Brighton Labour Process Group 1977; Cutler, 1978; Nichols, 1980).

5. Paradoxically, while emphasising the nature of changes in the labour process, Braverman ignores the processual dimension of conflict and resistance in production.

6. In addition to the usual objections to Marxist 'economics', the question of the formal/real subordination mentioned above, the empirical applicability of Marx's model of the development of modern industry are problematic. Problems aired by the more recent debates are referred to in the text.

7. See for example, Longrigg (1972) and Silver (1974) among many others.

8. For a close description of this process and a full explanation of the terms used see Silver (1974).

9. For example, just over half the workers explicitly stated that they thought 'placing' the horses in the appropriate races was the most important skill of a trainer.

Table 21 Perceptions of the most important skill in training
n = 58

	%
Placing the horses	51.7
Thorough knowledge of horses	32.8
Feeding	1.7
Need for multiple skills	3.4
Other	6.9
D.K.	3.4

10. In other words, changing the horses' bedding, grooming and so on.

11. There is some argument in the occupation about how much dressing over is strictly necessary, however.

12. The relation between betting revenue, taxation and racing is discussed fully in Chapter Nine on the role of the state in racing.

13. Some colourful accounts of the treatment of stable apprentices are available in many literary works. The account in Walter Greenwood's **Love on the Dole** (1933) and P. Welsh's **Stable Rat** (1979) are scarcely very far removed from George Moore's **Esther Waters** (1894) more than half a century earlier. From the trainer's point of view, T. Fitzgeorge-Parker (1968) corroborates much of these accounts. The 'boardwageman' was the term for a paid lad out of this time.

14. This 'explanation' provides an interesting case which bears upon Burawoy's (1978) claim that the distinctive feature of the problem of capitalist control is the simultaneous securing and obscuring of the process of extraction. This leads to the argument, among others, that capital needs to generate co-operation, consensus, legitimation, and so on, for adequate control. Superficially, this example might be taken to refute Burawoy's claim but the 'explanation' is mystificatory and perhaps doubly effective because it utilises a model of fair exchange in terms specific to the occupation.

15. The 'barn' system incorporates all the loose boxes under a single roof. Many are designed for example, to enable workers to muck out directly into a central passage which is then swept clean by a tractor. Other labour-saving devices are automatically filling water troughs and 'hot walkers' which are now quite common for exercising the 'lame and legless' where, somewhat ironically, a machine (with rotating arms) 'works' the horse.

16. This was indeed the path outlined by Marx for the development of the labour process from traditional handicraft to manufacture where quantum changes in the division of labour precede the introduction of machinery and the development of 'modern industry' or machinofacture.

17. There have been attempts, one sponsored by the Levy Board, to subdue this source of competition through the imposition of a minimum fee. This initiative fell foul of 'Restraint of Trade' legislation but the National Trainers Federation recommends a minimum fee for different areas.

18. The importance of the articulation of the labour market and labour process has been increasingly recognised in the last couple of years or so and much more explicit attention is now being given to labour markets by sociologists and especially by a school of American Marxists. While the present study was not explicitly addressed to this problem and the observations are mainly impressionistic, it does confirm the importance of this focus.

19. This 'problem' was given official recognition by a Jockey Club enquiry, The Blackwell Report (1974), though its recommendations had no impact on the industry.

20. MacCormack's figures show the following trend for the number of horses in training on the Flat (i.e. the number of individual runners):

1963	1969	1971	1975	1975
5051	5322	6136	7090	6893

(Adapted from M. MacCormack, 1978).

The real number of horses in training would have exceeded these totals as some horses may never run because of injury and so on.

21. More (1980) in his important study makes two points of interest to the present discussion. First, he argues that the apprenticeship system survived in manufacturing industry not because it provided a means of labour market control for workers but because the skills it transferred were suited to the technological imperatives and logic of the production process in British industry, that is because it suited the employers. The implication is that collective organisation alone would not have been sufficient to ensure the longevity of the apprenticeship system. The case of the racing apprenticeship described in the text is therefore more typical than might first have appeared. Secondly, where skills were in large part manual, the economic advantage to the employer of the long apprenticeship was that the unproductive training time at the beginning was (more than) compensated for by the routine performance of skilled work towards the end of the period on the same low wages. Where training involved the transfer of knowledge to a greater degree, apprentices could be paid higher wages as they could also perform useful manual tasks from the beginning. Historically, racing employers seem to have reaped both advantages as apprentices were called upon to perform tasks in the domestic economy of the trainer as well as their own work tasks.

22. One of my respondents, thirty-eight years old, had kept a copy of his indentures which he read out with a mixture of incredulity and relish.

23. It seems increasingly likely that following the 1980 Marriage Report on Apprentice Training, a small number of recruits will receive centralised intensive training, perhaps providing the hard core of skilled labour in future.

24. An element of casualisation exists in the industry because of the regular variation in the numbers of horses in training in stables in the course of a year. This reaches a trough in December and a peak in May-June. it is in the employers' short-term interests to shed some labour in the off-peak season.

25. Newby (1977) similarly argues that for many 'new' farmers - particularly from the services - farming is an attractive occupation because it is one remaining area of British society where traditionalism prevails.

26. For example, at the instigation of the Levy Board in 1968, deductions from prize money for stable staff (at present 5%) have gone some way to superceding the traditional 'present' by owners (often through the trainer) to the lad. The deductions must be paid to the workers as of right and distributed by agreement among the workforce. In practice the employer still has an important say in the organisation of the 'pool'

but formally at least it is out of his control.

27. 'First lot', 'second lot' and so on are the terms given to successive groups of horses as they are ridden out.

28. As Goffee and Scase point out, in making the case for 'fraternalism':

> "The choice of strategies available to employers is, therefore, severely constrained by prevailing market conditions such that even when enterprises are predominantly small-scale and characterised by a high level of personal employer-employee contact, paternalism may be an inappropriate employer strategy". (1982, p. 109).

29. For a summary of the 'size effect' debate see Curran and Stanworth (1979) and Newby (1977a, 1977b).

30. Richard Edwards (1979) for example, argues that labour market segmentation is a direct function of managerial-capitalist control structures. This view represented an important attempt to break the circularity of dual and segmented labour market models but it seems likely that it overestimates both the clairvoyance, homogeneity and power of capital.

CHAPTER SIX

HORSERACE TRAINING: WORK AND WORK RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

The literature on attachment to work and work orientations has proliferated in recent years though it remains a problematic area in both conceptual and methodological terms. The milestone in conceptual development in this area was undoubtedly provided by the emerging neo-Weberian tradition in British sociology headed by Goldthorpe and Lockwood and colleagues (Goldthorpe et al, 1969). The 'Affluent Workers' study has become part of the folklore of British sociology and has now been chewed over by virtually a generation of sociologists. The methodological framework developed by these writers and especially by Lockwood (1966) with respect to the problem of social consciousness and its determination, provided what amounted to a 'research programme', if not a paradigm (Cox, 1975) for the investigation of working class life and work. While a considerable body of justified internal and external criticism of this work has accumulated (Westergaard, 1970; Bulmer, 1975; Whelan, 1976; Rose, 1975; Crichter, 1979; Clarke, 1979, inter alia) it was, nevertheless, productive of a good deal of worthwhile research.

As Rose (1975) argues, a major contribution of this approach was the resurrection of an emphasis on the subjective rationality of the actor though it was one which, in many cases, unwisely supplanted a recognition of the importance of wider socio-economic structures and processes. While in no way wishing to discount the significance of this criticism, the overall sympathies of the approach may be seen to inform much of the following discussion. Pursuing the subjective rationality of workers in the industry is a

valuable way of elaborating the meanings generated and sustained by the racing game in Britain as a whole.

Rose (1975) also argues that the focus on the subject's personal rationality can easily be taken to excess as he claims it was in much phenomenologically-oriented work in the early 1970's. However, more recently this emphasis has been usefully adopted in another perhaps surprising direction, one which is more explictly informed by Marxist assumptions. In their work, Nichols, Beynon and others for example (Beynon, 1972; Nichols and Armstrong, 1976; Nichols and Beynon, 1977), have attempted to unravel subjective and collective responses to the experience of work dominated and structured by the needs of capital and accumulation; a quite explicit attempt to situate subjective rationality within a wider socio-economic structure. This has produced a kind of ethno-marxism where close attention is paid to the detail and interpretation of everyday work experiences using extensive quotations from subjects' verbal responses. It would be spurious here to refer constantly to the watchwords of Marxist analysis beyond what has already been argued in the preceding chapter, but this approach has been a useful reference point in formulating the discussion and considerable use is also made here of subjects' responses.

It is also somewhat fortuitous that the study which represents perhaps the most thoroughgoing empirical elaboration of the Lockwood programme, Newby's **The Deferential Worker** (Newby, 1977), should engage an area with commonly perceived and at least superficial similarities with the horse-racing industry, namely agriculture. Hence it will be instructive in the following to make some reference to Newby's discussion of the farm worker in the context of a traditionalist social structure.

Initially, at least, the notion of 'orientation to work' seemed to offer a way through the minefield of confusion generated by the literature on job satisfaction and work attachments, and the developing critiques of the empirical and methodological adequacy of the prevailing orthodoxies in this area were and remain convincing. Further attempts were made to elaborate the notion, for example, by Ingham (1970) to cope with the nuances of instrumentalism and expressiveness. However, it rapidly became apparent that 'orientations to work' were rather more complex, less stable, more chamelion-like and 'fuzzy at the edges' than had been envisaged (a consideration which also applied to the related concept of 'image of society' (Bulmer, 1975; Davis, 1979). Indeed it became evident that one could often only identify definitive orientations by doing some violence to the evidence in the majority of cases (Platt, 1972). The explanatory power of the concept advocated by Goldthorpe was particularly weakened by the doubt raised by, among others, Brown (1973), about the extent to which one could talk in terms of prior orientations. As is well known, Brown showed how the orientations of shipbuilding workers could be moulded during the period of apprentice socialisation. In spite of his rather eccentric war of attrition with Goldthorpe, Daniel (1969, 1971, 1973) also demonstrated the possibility of different orientations developing in relation to different aspects of the job, job content and job context for example; one or the other might be more or less relevant depending on the situation. Both of these points, in fact, have direct relevance to the consideration of the orientations, subjective significances of work for the racing lads. First, because it is virtually certain that whatever typical orientations the workers display, they will have been developed through the experience of work and in particular will have been shaped during the apprenticeship period, for most workers a period of five years and their first experience of full-time employment. The empirically and pragmatically based training embodied in the traditional

apprenticeship was especially well-suited to the transmission of values, norms and expectations, i.e. of occupational culture. This will be particularly evident when we discuss elements of the occupational community of the racing lad, however, it is also reflected in intersubjective perceptions of work and of employers. Secondly, while it is quite clear that in some respects the stableworkers conform to the outsider's impression of them as a group with high levels of work satisfaction and attachment, it is also the case that they are typically capable of expressing and demonstrating a sharp 'instrumentalism'.

Work: Involvement and Attachment

In assessing work attachment and satisfaction some attempt was made to put the respondent 'on the spot' by asking a conventional question in a generally inquisitorial manner. While the mandarins of research procedure would question this tactic, it did nevertheless seem to impose some reflection on the part of the respondents though equally many responses still smacked of common cliche. The respondents were asked whether they found their jobs especially interesting or not. The replies showed a similar pattern to that of Newby's agricultural workers. Nobody found it very boring whereas 88% found it at least interesting most of the time and nearly half claimed to have a very interesting job all the time; rather more racing lads than farm workers found it mostly monotonous and all of these because of the routine elements of the job. This is not especially surprising because the work does involve the same routine virtually day in day out, except when away racing. Every six or seven days a week (depending on week-end rotas) horses are mucked out and probably three or four lots ridden out; this is what these workers had in mind when citing routine. For most lads, however, this aspect of the routine lay at a taken for granted level and in reporting high levels of job interest they referred to the wide range of variation which could and did

take place within the contours of everyday tasks. One always rode out two/three or four lots, but no two lots were ever the same and riding race-horses does involve a structured uncertainty - coping with it is part of the skill of the job. The same tasks have to be performed but these have a degree of porosity which allows for great variation and continued interest.

As may be seen from Table 22, there appears to be a wider spread of worker reactions among the stable lads compared with the farmworkers. It seems likely that the reason for this is precisely this possibility of wide variation on set routines heightened by the uncertainty and danger involved in riding the thoroughbred, a factor absent from the more structured seasonal variation in farm workers' work. In the lads' perception, both routine and variation are apparent and these are perhaps reflected in less clear cut evaluations of work.

Table 22 Job Satisfaction: Stable Workers (979), Farm Workers (1972)

	Stableworkers (N = 58) %	Agricultural Workers (N = 233) %
Interesting all the time	46.6	31.3
Mostly interesting	41.4	61.8
Mostly dull and monotonous	12.1	6.0
Very dull and monotonous	-	0.9
	100.0	100.0

One lad brings out this paradoxical amalgam of interest and routine very well when he suggested that:

> "It's always changing in racing - I think that's probably the beauty of it 'cos everyday is really different. I know it's the same routine - two horses like - but it's always changing and you're not clock-watching all the time; you go out on the Heath and you're meeting different lads all the time - it's all one big joke more

than anything as far as I'm concerned, it's the easiest way to earn your crust as you can bloody get".

Variety of work was one of the most important factors which gave interest to the work and to being in racing as a whole, as one very articulate but representative lad of this view put it:

"Possibly the only thing is that you find everything in racing that you find in a life-time. You could find it all in a week, every week. There's times of great sadness, and old pal in the yard, a great horse you've grown to love, he falls and you have to put him down. That could happen today. You could be so low, on the verge of tears because you felt something for him. Or you come in one day and the bugger's gone, somebody's sold him and he's been a great servant to you and you've enjoyed his company for years. And times of great joy - when a horse you've spent a lot of time on, you've believed in him when nobody else has, then to see him go in front, - elation ..... it's got everything".

Apart from variety, the other major factor mentioned was that of working with animals, nearly a third of the lads mentioned this kind of reason. It appeared that this was to some degree linked in with the fact that the horses account for a large amount of the variety in the work as "you never quite get to the bottom of them". While none of the respondents was really able to specifically articulate what this factor amounted to, it is elaborated in other contexts which are noted later in the chapter. Also as we discuss more fully in the following chapter, the lads generate considerable personal loyalty to the horses which thus mediates their attachment to work and accounts for a large part of the expressive elements of what can be termed broadly as their orientations to work. In addition, of course, the lads draw on the certain amount of kudos associated with 'working with animals' which generally have a favoured place in British culture.

Responsibility, the challenge of helping to turn a raw thoroughbred into a proficient racing machine and the skill involved in this exercise, were

other factors mentioned. 'Responsibility' tended to be a reason advanced by those exercising it in the position of travelling head lad or head lad for example.

Table 23 Factors mentioned as generating job interest

	%
Work with animals	31.4
Variety of work	23.5
Challenge	15.7
Skill involved	15.7
Responsibility	11.8
	100.0

The respondents were also asked a very specific question about what particular aspect of the job they enjoyed most. Not surprisingly over half mentioned what is virtually the technical skill of the lads, namely riding out and in particular riding 'work'[2], though as we shall show later, this skill plays a very minor part in the evaluation of what makes a 'good stableman'. Most lads, however, particularly look forward to 'work days', i.e. when the horses are galloped or at least given some sharp work.

> "The riding out, in fact the best thing I like is galloping. Fast work, I love galloping, I don't know why. I've always really liked it ... I always look forward to that on Tuesday and Friday mornings when you go out onto the racecourse side and gallop."

A no less enthusiastic endorsement of this view was advanced by a much older middle-aged lad:

> "I think the main thing ... it's nice say come work morning and you go race-course side and you ride a couple of say two year olds five-six furlongs sharp - it's a great satisfaction riding a bit of work I think - on the morning you're looking forward to it and you know it's quite interesting if the going is fine and you come back

> and the gov'nor might say that so and so went very well with you Mick or Fred - and you're quite happy its gone right you know."

Older lads are nevertheless likely to be more circumspect about the joys of riding out and are more ready to point to other aspects of the job or to be reluctant to single out one aspect of the job.[3] Another middle-aged lad explained for example that:

> "In summertime people pay to do what we're getting paid to do so it's ridiculous. But as I say I'm getting a little old now ... I'm not frightened to go out - I'm frightened of coming off, that's the only difference - and I don't bounce as much as I used to, so I get a little bit dubious about what I get on, other than that I enjoy it."

This lad went on to emphasise the importance of doing his two and seeing his horses looking well, possibly as a rationalisation of the above, but nevertheless expressing a common sentiment of his generation:

> "You get a certain amount of pride if you've ... when you dress your horse over at night - you stand back and look at him: if he looks well you justifiably feel chuffed with yourself."

A sizeable minority of lads, in fact, were unwilling to differentiate aspects of the job in the above way, a quarter stating that they enjoyed all of the job. A small number of 'masochists' singled out breaking the yearlings ("I even love the yearlings" as one lad put it) and a few more enjoyed travelling the horses.

Table 24	Most Valued Aspects of the Job
	(n = 58) %
Riding at exercise/riding work	55.4
Enjoy it all	25.0
Travelling to races	12.5
Breaking the yearlings	3.6
Working with the other lads	1.8
D/K	1.8
	100.0

The intrinsic meaning of the work for the lads is further reinforced by the common belief that working with horses is somehow a special kind of work. Although lads talked about 'there always being something to learn' and referred to the dependence of the animal on the person looking after it, of the 78% who agreed that it was special, two thirds (66%) thought that this was because it involved special skills and 'know how'. Again, however, it was difficult to pin respondents down to a precise specification of this 'know how' which was evidently greater than the sum of a collection of skills and was something 'you either had or you hadn't!'.

Newby found that farmworkers were rather more specific about the things they disliked about the job.[4] This was only partially true of the racing lads, over two-thirds of whom, remarkably, could say that there was no one aspect that they particularly disliked compared with a quarter of the agricultural workers for example. However, Newby's respondents were allowed to cite extrinsic reasons whereas respondents in this my sample were restricted to features of what they actually did at work. This reluctance to denigrate aspects of the work experience appeared to be quite genuine and cannot be explained in terms of respondents 'protecting self'.[5] This is not to

say that there were not tedious moments in the job but these did not seem to be features worth reifying as the following statements illustrate.

> "Nothing really ... getting up in the morning ... no I don't think there's anything I dislike doing."

> "Yes - don't like mucking out or not keen on dressing over, riding out in the rain. But the good and great things far outweigh them. You switch off, like you do any job, you go onto automatic pilot when you do things like that."

> "You mean sweeping the yards or something? There isn't actually. I like to go into everything. I suppose sometimes when you've had a hard day something comes a bit harder and you think, oh, I've got to go and do this now - but generally I just like doing anything. I'd rather go and do it and get it done with."

Table 25 Job Intrinsic Dislikes among Racing Lads

	(n = 58) %
Nothing in particular	67.2
Mucking out	15.5
Riding/breaking yearlings	5.2
Riding	3.4
Grooming/dressing	1.7
Other	6.9
	100.0

Hence, even when specific aspects are mentioned they do not carry much conviction or affective weight and the feelings of the majority are economically summed up by this middle-aged lad:

> "you know there isn't. I couldn't really say there's any particular time of the day or part of the job that I don't look forward to doing".

However, the tasks which evoke some disfavour are menial tasks such as mucking out and sweeping yards and those which are somewhat hazardous, such as riding yearlings. Lads who cited the latter distinguished 'breaking' and riding the yearlings; the former in fact was looked on as being an

interesting and challenging exercise, especially by the older lads; riding them away, however, for that uncertain five or six weeks afterwards, was much more problematic. As the lad, above who confessed to not bouncing anymore, put it:

> "Ruddy yearlings, that's the only thing, or anything that's a bit awkward."

Younger lads are also capable of being sceptical of the wisdom of riding yearlings as was this respondent who had admittedly experienced an appalling accident.

> "I've been called by a few trainers as being a good handler of yearlings, driving them, breaking them in, but the one thing I hate doing to them is riding them. I don't know why, probably because I'm a bit windy these days."

These extracts raise the question of 'losing your nerve', an issue returned to in the next chapter as is the question of attachment to the horses, the objects of the production process.

However, overall what is reported here clearly amounts to high levels of intrinsic work satisfaction. This provides an affective resource pool with which the stableworkers may confront the recurring strains on their attachment to their jobs. Equally it is evidently the case that the stableworker is not thereby blinded to other work related frustrations or extrinsic considerations.

The changing organisation of work discussed in the last chapter is a source of dissatisfaction among most of the older lads though because this factor only became apparent during the course of the research it was not possible to quantify extent. Almost any lad who has been in the industry for

ten years served a long apprenticeship. In most cases this amounted to five years though seven was not uncommon. One lad in my sample, for example, having completed five years, signed on for a further two in order to get more rides with his 'guv'nor'. Most lads of this era are capable of painting colourful pictures of life under the old regimes and Walter Greenwood's description in **Love on the Dole** (1933) would not have been out of place in the 1960's and as many of my respondents would testify, is still not of purely historical interest in some parts of the country. Looking back, these times are often remembered with some affection and even as 'the best years of my life'. However, in spite of the exaggeration there is no doubt that these experiences were hard. Living conditions were often appalling, wages something of a joke - if an infrequent one - discipline was often harsh and arbitrary and enforced deference the order of the day.

A number of daily rituals served to remind the lads of their inferiority, often subtly interwoven with routine technical work tasks. The work as often closely supervised and performance closely monitored, the emphasis was on thoroughness, correct technique and procedure. Whatever the merits of the apprenticeship system as a form of pedagogy, these latter features evidently rubbed off on a large number of trainees. These are also characteristics of stable work which have come under greatest pressure during the last half decade or so and, as a consequence, many of the lads who endured this form of socialisation see their 'job' being undermined, many of their skills as redundant, those earlier hard times as wasted. This poses a threat to their occupational identity and gives added fuel and real substance to perennial intergenerational tensions, developments which are discussed in the next chapter. One lad is quoted there as finding work under the current circumstances frustrating, another as an assault to his dignity as a skilled man, and for the older lads overall it has coloured their attachment to the

job and their work satisfaction. Equally no-one would wish a return to the 'bullshit' and repression of earlier times. However, with little real choice, for the most part the lads collude with the various moments of dilution and seem to be as prone to describe current jobs as a 'doss' or 'easy' as their younger colleagues, albeit with a tinge of guilt. For example, in answer to a question probing perceptions of the onset of labour intensification one lad argued that:

> "I don't know when I got to notice it falling off ... it's more or less now that I sit back and notice that it's fallen off more than anything. You know as I've worked through it you don't take a lot of notice. But I know the difference in what I used to do as to what I do now. As I say I look after my horses but not so much as I would have done then ... because if I'd done some of the things I do today I'd have certainly got my backside kicked."

Like others this lad was also sceptical of the value of the long hours spent grooming horses and 'bashing them with a wisp' which in his view was one of the reasons more horses seemed to be 'sour' then compared with today. Superfluous jobs there were then, though there was a 'method behind the madness' in some of them, head collars did seem to last longer in those days when hours might be spent 'bulling them up'. Typically also, this respondent described the demise of training the apprentices, once the specific responsibility of a senior or the head lad.

> "I mean if you don't go down there to be taught (the Apprentice Training School), you get taught nothing in the yard. They just sling 'em in and that's it. They're not taught anything. Today I don't think you'll find a lad that knows how to do his job properly at all, really in that respect, because he's not taught as we were taught."

Further

> "It's got worse because there's not the staff in racing that there used to be - you had two horses to look after and that was that. Now you don't, you've probably got three or four sometimes in the yard to look after so naturally things have got to be done quicker."

The respondent then went on to detail what this meant for the organisation of work.

Atavism, idealisation of the past, scepticism towards younger generations of workers, are possibly pervasive features of British working class culture and are not specific to racing lads.[7] However, it does appear that the perspectives outlined above reflect real changes in the nature of work for the stableworker at an important point in the history of the occupation. Though there are no definitive historical reference points, 75% of respondents claimed that they now did at least three horses regularly and a fifth of those did at least four regularly; in practice, when racing is under way it means that they will often find themselves doing more than this number. It will be evident from the discussion of the previous chapter, however, that in this context 'intensification' of labour does not necessarily, though it normally does, mean that the workers work harder but that they have in principle more to do; in practice this means more often that some things are not done or that others are done more perfunctorily, i.e. corners are cut. Statements such as "it's all rush", frequently used assembly line metaphors, indicate that these are irksome if inevitable developments. Some of the intrinsic meaning then seems to have gone out of the job and has weakened the attachment of some workers.

As with Newby's farm workers, this kind of evidence lends some partial and superficial support to the common stereotype of the stableworker's occupation as an example of one of those jobs where intrinsic satisfaction is traded for relatively low monetary rewards. As Newby argues, it then seems self-evident that the workers who remain any length of time in the industry are those who value expressive rewards more highly than extrinsic or

instrumental considerations. The empirical fallacy of this view will become evident in due course. However, this type of essentially common-sense argument was given some support by the style of reasoning advanced by the 'Affluent Worker' writers. This view which adopted a neo-classical model of the labour market (Blackburn and Mann, 1979) envisaged the worker as a choice-making animal consciously pursuing life projects in at least a quasi-rational manner. The affluent, instrumentally oriented worker thus exchanged alienating work experience for high earnings in order to better develop a chosen life style centred around domestic sociability. This instrumentalism derived from the choice of a particular 'project'. Criticisms of this model and the notion of instrumentalism have been well made (Blackburn and Mann, 1979; Nichols and Armstrong, 1976, inter alia) as they have of the twin thesis of the prototypicality of instrumental privatisation. However, in connection with this particular case, two points seem worth noting.

First, the preoccupation with affluence in the 1960's, premature as it now appears with the benefit of hindsight, somewhat deflected attention from the simple consideration that for a sizeable proportion of the working class living at or around officially designated levels of poverty, instrumentalism, even pronounced instrumentalism, was not a luxurious matter of choice but a structured necessity of everyday life. For the low paid whatever the occupation, the 'money', 'how to get more of it' and 'how to manage what you've got' is a constant preoccupation and never far below the level of consciousness. For the male married racing lad in particular, family responsibilities ensure that 'the money' permanently impinges on the evaluation of work; the data from the study suggest that single lads are no less aware of the implications of marriage for their standard of living on their current wage. It should also be noted here that the job ladder in

racing is truncated. The opportunities available for 'promotion' through time serving are limited to 'travelling head lad' and 'head lad'. Long service may be expected to encourage preferential treatment in terms of 'extras' but this is very uncertain.

Second, it is evident that the neo-classical model embodies some rather glib assumptions about the real extent of choice available to workers to pursue market rationality and about occupational choice and placement generally (even in the context of relatively full employment).[9] It might be argued that truly instrumental workers would give up satisfying work such as stable work for higher paying work to which they might be suited such as the assembly work which had become more available in Newmarket in recent years. Many indeed have taken this course but it would be a mistake to deduce that this was a free choice. When five years have been invested in an apprenticeship with then additional years experience in an occupation, freedom of choice represents a vacuous formality, somewhat akin to a voluntary amputation.

As suggested previously, market conditions up to the period of the fieldwork and the onset of the current recession had broadly moved in favour of the stables workforce and many workers were compelled by force of circumstance to take advantage of this situation. However, there appears to be a very thin line between those who stayed in the industry and those who left and it would be wrong to conclude that those who stay are by definition necessarily less instrumental than those who go; over two-thirds of the sample had left the industry for an outside job at least once, a fifth at least twice. Virtually everyone will leave at some time or another. The following statement typifies the predicament in which many lads find themselves and arose from a question which asked the respondent to cast his mind back over

his working life to identify his best job.

> "That's a hard question isn't it. I worked at Sprites earning near on £120 a week, I work in racing and earn £50. You know it's a hard job, I had a family to bring up - so actually working with the caravans it put more money into my house, more money for the family and everything. But my heart's in racing."

Equally it was apparent that the main reason this lad returned to racing was to help further (successfully) the career of his eldest son as a jockey. The question of money was never very far from the surface during the interviews whatever the explicit subject of the discussion. Of course, there is a sense in which such an emphasis is a function of the interview situation itself, one which provides the opportunity for the airing of grievances to a neutral outsider. Nevertheless, the extent to which the theme did permeate the discussion is indicative of the enforced instrumentalism of the occupation. A graphic if slightly eccentric example of the point, is given by a lad in the context of the job interest question:

> "Oh yes, every day there's something different. A different horse to ride. It's always interesting work. Everytime you come to yearlings, you never know what a yearling's going to do ... it's always interesting work. The only boring thing is the wages. You know getting that (showing pay packet) at the end of the week, and you think to yourself, Christ, 7 day week. I work Saturday morning, got back in the house at two o'clock Sunday morning - worked straight through. I mean that was at the races and I had time to sit down and that..., but it was all ... I couldn't go to sleep or things like that, had to travel home and all I got was £4.50 for the day. And that was like ... Saturday you get £4 anyway but because it was night racing I got an extra 50p. Big deal. I mean if you were in a factory you'd get time and a half, our wage is £1.88 for overtime so I'd get twice that wouldn't I; I'd get more than that for an hour ..." (My emphasis)

The follow-up questions on factors contributing to job interest and most valued aspects of the job, were geared towards intrinsic factors but no-one volunteered 'good money' as a reason for job interest or satisfaction! Money or lack of it, was the most frequently specified negative feature in the

evaluation of the job as a whole which included both extrinsic and intrinsic considerations.

Table 26 Negative factors in overall job evaluation

	(n = 58) %
Low wages	36.2
Winter work	22.4
Hours - weekend work	17.2
Hours - evening stables	5.2
The danger	3.4
Nothing special	15.5
	100.0

* The average reported take-home pay for the sample was £44.43 from an average gross wage of £56.03 (1979)

However, as evident from the table, the 'hours' and 'winter work' are important factors and a small minority failed to specify any one particular negative factor. If anything, however, the preoccupation with wages is understated insofar as this issue is closely bound up with the 'hours' although an attempt was made in coding to keep the issue of the pattern of hours distinct from 'wages for hours worked'. The case from the point of view of 'the money' was often forcefully put as this example illustrates:

> "Money - quite simply there's not enough of it. Everywhere you go you will probably hear people saying the same - the standard in racing today is nowhere near as high as it used to be and the first people to moan about it is the trainers and the owners. What they don't realise is because they are paying very poor wages, thinking lads with a bit of something about them are going to think, well, I can't support a family on this - I've known lads stay in it as long as they can and then think to themselves, well look, I've got to get out, I've got a family - I've got to put them first. And they'll go up the factory earning £80/£90 a week, simply because they've got to - the thinking lads - they've got to get out of the game because they can't afford to live in it."

Somewhat paradoxically, however, over half the lads (55%) claimed either

that no amount would take them away from racing or that it was not a question of money. In response to the question "how much more than your present wage would you accept for another job outside of racing?", less than a third would have been tempted away by a £30 differential. Here is faced the commonplace difficulty with this kind of investigation, namely the problem of evaluating what people say in different contexts which may often be paradoxical, and of reconciling what they say with what they do. Low wages, for example, was the most frequently cited reason which would make it difficult for them to stay in the industry (33%) and a third of these go on to say later that no amount would take them away. There is then a degree of ambivalence in these responses which indicates a high emotional commitment to the industry but also a rather more conditional practical one.

It has already been pointed out that the majority of lads have gone out of the industry at one time or another, what is also clear is that there is a relatively high degree of occupational mobility within it. The mean number of jobs held by the non-apprentices was 4.7, over half had had at least 4, compared with a mean of 3.76 for Newby's farm workers. Further, only half the sample (51.7%) could say they had been in one job at least five years and it should be remembered that this is a generation of workers who would normally have served a five year apprenticeship[10], usually with one employer.

Indentures were often transferred to another trainer but it seems from evidence on length of stay in the first job that for most workers their apprenticeship was the longest they spent in any one job. Obviously people change jobs for a variety of reasons and there is an element of casualism in racing employment which is to a certain extent reflected in these patterns. However, the search for better pay and conditions must account for a good proportion of this mobility. Older lads tend to see this mobility as an

aspect of 'dossing' (a notion discussed in Chapter 7) but while they may have now settled down relatively, there does not seem to be much of a case for arguing that they were any less prone to follow the money than their younger colleagues, at least in their earlier days.

Indeed the careers of many middle-aged, male lads approximate to a pattern which may usefully be summarised at this point. The period from the age of 15-20 years will have been occupied by the racing apprenticeship with one employer - often the longest period of employment with any one employer. With the chance of jockeyship passed, the apprenticeship will be followed by a succession of jobs in other racing stables, often in other racing centres as the individual learns to flex the market muscles of the skilled journeyman. These jobs may be interposed by jobs outside of racing in the immediate pursuit of higher wages, the avoidance of the dubious pleasures of winter work or simply for a change. Marriage in early or mid-twenties may have a steadying effect in the search for stability of earnings and security of employment with a good trainer, especially one offering accommodation for married lads. In the absence of cheap accommodation, marriage with the arrival of children will encourage the search for higher paid work outside of racing which will continue until family circumstances make paid employment a renewed possibility for both spouses. A return to racing may be sought at this stage but this will continue to depend on the paid employment of the female spouse, assuming that a strong attachment to a life style dependent on high manual wages has not been generated in the meantime. There are thus a number of critical stages in the occupational career of the stableworker at which continued participation is problematic. In practice, a large number of lads disappear at these points never to return.

It would be erroneous to conclude, however, that the stableman displays

the apparently ruthless calculativeness of Goldthorpe's affluent workers who were after all portrayed as exercising a pronounced instrumentality, a point which is often neglected in the more eccentric critiques (for example, Crichter, 1979). Nevertheless, the racing lads adopt a reluctant instrumentalism, one which is not so much masked by constraining factors as Newby argues for the farm workers, as confused by an affective attachment to an occupation whose tradition of craft, skill and pride (though not control) is transmitted in a process of socialisation in which the worker typically invests a sizeable chunk of his life. It may well be that with the dilution of this tradition instrumentalism may become more evident, a development ingenuously hinted at by Eaton (1976), though largely for the wrong reasons.[11]

However, the racing lad seems to have both an instrumental and expressive orientation and, as with the farm workers, he likes very much what he does for his living but is much less keen on the terms on which he does it. Given the choice again though, compared with the farm workers, he is readier to contemplate reincarnation as a racing lad (71% vs 55%) but equally dubious about recommending the occupation to his offspring (65% vs 73.5%). It would, however, be stretching credibility to suggest as Daniel (1969) would seem to imply, that these workers maintain some kind of schizoid differentiation between the content of their job and the terms of the wage-labour exchange. As we have argued, the unfavourability of the latter interweaves with intrinsic satisfactions to render attachment to the work in a state of permanent tension, though it is by no means brittle. As we suggested earlier, it is most unlikely that these strands in work orientations are the result of prior choices or strategies. Most workers enter the industry at the earliest possible working age; for 70% it is their first full-time job - many of the remaining 30% were hanging about in jobs

waiting for an opening in racing; nearly 90% came from urban or industrial urban environments, 70% had fathers in manual occupations and hailed from thoroughly working class backgrounds. Given this kind of input there is only one way in which common perceptions and definitions of reality grow and that is through exposure to the occupation in the widest sense - a process which will become even more evident in the next chapter.

However, it is clear that in contrast to the farmworkers whose work situation has veered towards one which has undermined face to face interaction between workmates and workplace sociability, the work of the racing lad is still essentially sociable and collective. As we have already noted, racing establishments are relatively small enterprises by any standards with real size limits to effective operation. Few of even the elite band of trainers have found that they can handle more than 120 horses per season. Nevertheless, racehorse training is a labour intensive industry despite the introduction of some labour saving devices and systems. As noted previously, there is some technical division of labour, but work tasks tend to be undertaken by a concentration of workers performing virtually the same tasks in the same space. Interaction is frequent and pervasive though it was clear from my own observations that the pressure to 'get done' especially at evening stables offers limits to purely gratuitous socialising. The 'verballing', 'ribbing', banter and hoaxing which can be found around any yard though, are expressions of real workplace sociability. While mucking out the first lot in the depths of winter is met with little relish, the rest of the day is encountered with equanimity and even humour.

The majority (74%) of respondents claimed to know most of the other lads in the yard quite well though the majority again claimed that they had only one, two or no close friends in the yard, a feature consistent with job

mobility patterns since, as will be shown later, most friends are in racing anyway.[12] However, workplace relationships are quite close knit and help to sustain the occupational culture of the lads (and some yards are known for this collective, out-of-work socialising). Nevertheless, it would be difficult to argue that they also sustain oppositional elements within that culture or that they necessarily generate workplace solidarity, a characteristic which the lads themselves recognise to be noticeably lacking among their number. Oppositional elements there are but as will be evident, these are mediated and interwoven with the structured, competitive individualism of the occupation which reflects the competitive (sporting) ethos of the industry as a whole. This syndrome is partly a cause of and reinforced by, the lack of a history of collective organisation. Before exploring the themes of sociability and solidarity further it will be instructive to examine the relations with employers as perceived by the lads in the study.

Relations with employers

As Newby (1977a, 1977b) has cogently argued, employer-employee relations need to be viewed in the context of the modes of control operative in the workplace or, alternatively, in the light of the stance which the employer adopts to the employment relationship. Such a qualification is by no means apparent in much of the conventional literature in industrial sociology or even within that enclave of interest in the early '70's in the 'size effect'.[13] Unfortunately, for practical reasons, the present study was not able to incorporate an explicit study of employer attitudes in the industry and some of what follows therefore stems from personal observations and knowledge of employer strategies in this location, particularly in connection with the yards with which I had some contact.

The employers themselves are quite a heterogenous group in terms of

social backgrounds which reflect the major routes into the training business. They include ex-jockeys with original working class credentials, petty bourgeois entrepreneurial elements, the 'ex-militarised' gentry, upper class public school recruits and the network of racing families of which there have been a number of famous dynasties in Newmarket. Their number also includes a smattering of ex-stable workers of whom some have followed quite remarkable personal mobility paths. Khan (1980) has also argued that the training occupation is internally segmented along the boundary of 'success' and has pointed to the emergence of a new type of 'business trainer' with a more aggressive attitude to attracting and conducting business. His research also points to considerable differences of life styles among trainers. Nevertheless, all require to a greater or lesser extent the cultivation of conncections and the favour of wealthy patrons and clients. Whatever their backgrounds the nature of racehorse training as a modified form of essentially 'oligarchic patronage' (Johnson, 1972) allows little scope for radically divergent perspectives which the insular nature of the training community also pressures towards homogeneity. Despite the evident individual and circumstantial differences, the trainers, qua employers at least, seem to share broadly common outlooks, and as the 1975 Newmarket strike indicated, common strategies as well (see Chapter Eight).

However, it has been observed already that while it may be possible to construct ideal typical modes of control or employer strategies in the manner in which Newby does, i.e. patriarchal versus bureaucratic modes, in practice it may often be difficult to distinguish effectively between modes and styles of control. Newby, in fact, recognises this possibility when he suggests that many farmers in his study who adopted 'bureacratic control structures' nevertheless carried on the pretence of traditionalism. It may be that the 'pretence' may be carried out with such vigour that it all but emasculated

the effect of the 'real' control structure so that it becomes extremely difficult to say which mode of control is in the ascendance. This empirical problem is further confused in Newby's discussion by the lack of an explicit operational definition of the two control structures. It is not clear whether the number of hierarchical levels, the amount of work contact with the employees or the prevalence of the cash nexus, either singly or in combination, are indicative. As already noted, in the case of racing stables, hierarchies remain undifferentiated with one level only, normally interposing between employer and employee. Employers are in regular though by no means continual contact with workers. It is more difficult to assess attitudes towards the cash nexus in general. However, it is clear, for example, that there is a certain amount of wage competition, largely incongruous with traditional control, between employers in the context of labour shortage and that to an extent therefore employer recruitment strategies probably display a greater balance of universalistic elements than in previous generations. Paradoxically, this situation also encourages employers to extend their orientation towards reliable and valued employees beyond the wage exchange with additional benefits and indulgencies - a feature of traditionalism, if for instrumental reasons. It seems likely, however, that the overall appearance of the control relationship veers towards patriarchialism and traditionalism even if in the current situation it is a 'traditionalism manque'. There are, nevertheless, exceptions and confusions which will become apparent. One employer, for example, with a business background, dedicated to making his training pay as a commercial concern pursued a quite thoroughgoing paternalism. However, it has been suggested that traditionalism in this context is under pressure from economic factors and it is possible that this is to some extent reflected in the stablemen's perceived relations with employers.

As was seen previously, racing lads tend to vote with their feet though it is admittedly not always a completely free vote. Nevertheless, in view of this, it is not surprising that their evaluation of their current employer tends to be a positive one, though as will be shown in the discussion of trade unionism, the stable worker tends to have a very low opinion of employers in the industry as a whole. For example, all but one of the respondents thought that their present yard was about as good a place to work as any in the Town - as Table 27 indicates - and nearly half of these suggested that this was because they had a 'good guv'nor' or sentiments to that effect. This compared with only a fifth who explicitly mentioned good wages and conditions, for example. (The farm workers in Newby's study were less inclined to mention the 'good boss' factor when asked a similar question. Overall, only 21% did so, though the proportion was higher (39%) for those on 'patriarchal' farms).[14]

Table 27 — Reasons for believing present yard to be about as good as any to work for

	(n = 57) %
'Good Guv'nor'	43.9
Good wages	19.3
Friendly atmosphere	7.0
Nothing in particular	7.0
Good mates	5.2
Good horses	1.8
Other	12.3
D.K.	3.5
	100.0

Obviously calculative elements are bound up in this evaluation and a good guv'nor is likely to be one who pays well, attracts good horses to the yard and therefore one who also may be seen as a good trainer. As this lad explains, a good guv'nor may also be one who does not pester you.

> "I think he's quite an easy guv'nor in a way. He's not always jumping on top of you all the time, he's quite easy going which makes quite a difference."

It would be erroneous to suggest, however, that evaluations are predominantly calculative, for another lad it meant that:

> "The atmosphere in the yard is very, very friendly, terrific guv'nor to the lads he is. You never get any of the lads talking about him saying he should have done this ... they really do appreciate you. It really is a very, very nice yard to work in."

However, the employer in question was himself an ex-stable lad and a famous jockey whose managerial style could only very loosely be termed traditionalist. Nevertheless, as is evident from this statement, in the short time he had spent as a trainer, this employer had engendered considerable personal loyalty and developed a reputation for recognising the contribution of his lads. As Newby argued in connection with the farm workers, the relationship with the employer is in general not regarded as a conflictful one, at least on a personal level. In general too, however, the relationships are not as clearly diffuse and particularistic as with the farm workers and even in individual cases where they are, the implications are by no means straightforward as this worker, a head lad from a small yard and thus one bound to be in close contact with the employer, illustrates:

> "Well to me it is. It's a small yard, I'm happy there, I have my ups and downs, I have my ups and downs with the guv'nor but we try to work like that - he relies on me so much - he pays my wages. I don't rely on him because I can leave there and get a job anywhere in Newmarket. But he relies on me and we try to work together, the more winners we can put together <u>the more I get out of it."</u>

In many ways this account is a nest of paradoxes, as noted earlier extrinsic and intrinsic satisfactions interweave, an obviously particularlistic relationship

co-exists with a fierce independence; personal commitment and loyalty are hedged with an underlying calculativeness. Hence, while on the whole the lads display one kind of attitudinal characteristic commensurate with a patriarchal mode of control (39.6% of farm workers on 'patriarchal' farms mentioned a 'good boss' as the reason for considering the present farm the best one to work on) that stance itself is beset with ambiguity.

No direct attempt was made in the survey to tap perceptions of harmony/conflict through the infamous 'football team question'. The limitations of this item have been exposed by a number of writers among whom, for example, Ramsay (1975) has shown that it failed to distinguish co-ordinative and consensual moments of collective labour and that responses to this question could alter drastically according to which of these moments was made explicit. Some attempt was made to control for this consideration in a rather eccentric question which ran as follows: "Well, if we leave out the factor of say, good horses, what would you say was the most important other factor helping to make a successful stable?". This produced some rather terse replies and we discuss it in another context later but it was sufficiently open-ended to allow the 'harmonistic' view to emerge. The results reported in Table 28 tended to confirm Ramsey's findings. Robbed of the convenient cliches of national pastimes, only two respondents were spontaneously able to couch a reply in what might be termed a 'harmonistic emphasis' or an emphasis on employer/employee teamwork. Over half, 57%, thought that the important factor was a good work force or lads who knew their jobs and another 17% emphasised the need for teamwork among the lads themselves. It seems then, that the lads place far greater stress on 'horizontal' considerations than 'vertical' ones.

Table 28 Workers perceptions of the most important factors for a successful stable

	(n = 58) %
Good lads (who know their jobs)	56.9
Teamwork among the lads	17.2
Good Head Lad	6.9
Cooperation between Trainers and Lads	3.4
Knowledgeable Trainer	1.7
Good 'office'	1.7
Other	3.4
DK	8.6
	100.0

Other factors mentioned were those such as 'luck', a good head lad, a good office, a knowledgeable trainer, and so on. Equally, the responses of course do not by any means suggest that there is not a generally harmonious working relationship; harmony is possibly a taken for granted assumption. However, the responses do at least indicate that diffuse and particularistic relationships at work, such as they are in this case, do not evoke either unquestioned deference to traditional authority or to the 'esoteric' skills of the employer as trainer (in fact the closer they are the more transparent may those skills appear). As with our previous argument then, the conclusion would seem to be that traditionalism may cut but not very deeply.

Most (72%) of the lads, however, reported that they got on very well with their emplolyer and a substantial minority claimed that they thought they 'knew' the trainer very well. Only one respondent reported that the relationship was not a very good one. One of the popular reasons for 'getting on well' was that the guv'nor was seen as being 'straight with you'. In broad terms this meant that if he thought something was wrong 'he'd tell

you' in undisguised terms, but equally the reverse was expected to hold good without grudges being harboured on either side. Of the respondents with positive assessments of their relationship to the trainer (that is they viewed their relationship as 'alright' or better) 24.1% held this type of view, one which is characteristic of the 'ups and downs' type of argument quoted earlier and of particularistic relationships, though it often seemed to be advanced as an aggressive mark of independence with the implication that if the employer 'did not like it, he could lump it'. An illustration of this view by one respondent actually emerged in the context of another inquiry concerning the willingness of the subject to ask the employer for personal advice, but it is instructive to cite it here:

> "As regards humane things ... he's brilliant. He's a very hard exterior but so soft on the inside. I could ask him for anything, he'd give it me. I know he would. But we're always at loggerheads in the yard for different reasons. He moans about how I muck them out, so I say, well do you want them mucked out or rode out? And off he'll scurry. But half his gardening stuff I've got. We get on very well really. Complement one another."

Significantly this yard (a small one of 30 horses) was one in which the trainer dispensed with a head lad and mucked in where necessary as a couple of small trainers were wont to do. What is also implied in this 'straight with you' perspective is for practical purposes a temporary suspension, at least from the point of view of the lad, of the differentiation of the employment relationship. It is this situation which most closely resembles the pattern of 'fraternalism' discussed in the previous chapter. This can, foster identity with the employer though this need not lead, as is clear from the above, to an unproblematic deference. The following respondent for example had shown considerable displeasure in reflecting on the external requirements of enforced deference in earlier working experience where he was addressed by his surname and was required to use the form 'Sir' to his

employer. However, he volunteered this evaluation of the present employer relationship:

> "very, very well, it's the best relationship I've had with a guv'nor. I can speak to him on level terms instead of him looking down at me and me always having to look up at him."

Table 29 Reasons for getting on with the Trainer

	(n = 54) %
Leaves you alone	29.6
Straight with you	24.1
Known him a long time	11.1
Very gair guv'nor	11.1
Mucks in with the lads	9.3
Takes an interest in you	9.3
Respects your know how	5.5
	100.0

However, interestingly the major type of reason given for 'getting on well' with the employer was broadly that he 'left you alone' which accounted for a 29.6% of the responses. In principle, of course such a value could have ambiguous connotations, but broadly it amounted to what more conventionally may be seen as a preference for autonomy, the scope to get on with the job without interference - the traditional prerogative of the craftsman - rather than as an anti-authoritarian statement of the kind implied by the 'affluent workers' (Goldthorpe et al 1969) in their relations with supervisors. Equally, the racing lads do not expect to be pushed around at work. In the farmworkers study, Newby cross-tabulates reasons for a good relationship with the employer with the operative mode of control and implies that the higher value placed on autonomy by workers on 'bureaucratic' farms (30.4% vs 21.6% on patriarchal farms) is indicative of a more calculative commitment on the part of the workers. Unfortunately, an attempt to

replicate this test quantitatively using the survey data would be spurious, especially in the light of the previous qualifications about this distinction. Nevertheless, impressionistically, the value of non-interference did not seem among the stable lads indicative of radically divergent commitments but if anything had rather more to do with the implicit craft ethos which in turn is possibly productive of more pronounced levels of 'cosmopolitanism' among the lads, a theme taken up in the next chapter.

While it is consistent with the earlier finding regarding the emphasis on 'horizontal' relations, all this is largely speculative and the following statements underline the need for caution in interpretation. Asked how well he thought he knew his employer, this respondent also volunteered a response to the question about how well he thought he got on with the employer:

> "Not very well really - not outside of work you know what I mean he's the guv'nor we're the workers you know ... but we get on very well. He's pretty good, leaves you alone. He treated me very well when I was off work with the operation and he paid me every week which he didn't have to do ... mind you that's few and far between that, most of the others - they're supposed to pay you for four weeks then you're on your own and you are. Well he didn't he saw me right through."

In this case, obviously it is difficult to disentangle day to day 'on the job relations' and the preference for non-interference, from the reaction to the employer's albeit instrumental, paternalism. (The yard was and had been very short staffed at the time). It might be added here that this respondent had been effectively blacklisted for three years following his activities in the 1975 strike and was not generally well disposed towards the employers as a whole. Another well travelled lad with a similarly sceptical view towards the employers but who claimed to be in the best 'job' in the town put the view of many, if a little tersely, in suggesting that "I get on with him alright, he never bothers you". Other reasons mentioned included the length

of time the worker had known the employer, a broad evaluation of the employer as a very fair guv'nor, the belief that the trainer mucked in with the lads and the fact that the employer took a personal interest in you, although none of these accounted for more than 10% of the responses. Some of these responses, however, display a genuine personal esteem for the particular employer though this need not extend to an automatic deference to authority or necessarily imply deferential patterns of interaction as both the previous extended quotation and the following one indicate. In explaining that he got on very well with his employer this middle-aged lad argued:

> "Well I've never given him the opportunity to sack me - apart from that he wouldn't sack anybody on the spot, he's a very fair guv'nor - he's given lads chance after chance, I've seen it and he's still sort of having them back - if you want something for outside your work above your wages, he'll always see you get it or if you wanted a couple of days to go somewhere he's never turned a blind eye and yet some don't treat you very well at all you know. Overall he's a great guy there's no doubt about it."

Everyday work relationships then are not seen as problematic though there appeared to be a far more reticent use of the family metaphor than among the farmworkers for example. There also seems less of a case for suggesting that differences in the organisation of work can straightforwardly account for different perceptions of the reasons for good working relationships. As already suggested, the yards as a whole with one or two exceptions, approximate to patriarchal modes or at least styles of control, neither of the major reasons given, for getting on well with the employer, however, particularly reflect the appropriate deferential response to that mode or style; about as many lads preferred autonomy for example as did the workers on bureaucratic farms, which for Newby indicates a more calculative attachment to the employer.[15]

Nevertheless, as Newby suggests, where the worker does have 'downs' as

opposed to 'ups', these tend to be viewed very much in personal individualistic terms. Indeed most of the respondents (71.7%) felt that in their yard they were treated as individuals as opposed to cogs in a machine or as a proverbial 'number' but there seems to be a sort of collective ambivalence and insecurity on this issue as over 80% (82.8%) felt that in the case of racing as a whole, the situation was the other way round.[16] This was also reflected in some individual ambivalence, examples of which indicate the danger of reading off genuine patterns of deferential interaction from the emphasis on the 'personal'. The following statement is illustrative though it should be said that no other respondent went to quite the same length to explain his view, nevertheless it is worth quoting fully length. A leading question was asked which went as follows: "It's often said these days that workers are treated more like cogs in a machine rather than as individual human beings, would you say that was true of your particular yard?". A lad with thirty years experience in the game argued:

> "That's a bit hard, that one, because I have the feeling that you are a bit - they varnish it over a bit - you're called by your first name - where at one time it was your surname - if you was lucky. This place especially where I am now, he doesn't really talk to you and bring you into his confidence - he talks over you. He tries to make you a bloody idiot at most times. We all know what he's doing so it doesn't work a lot of the time but he does try to think you are a little bit below him. He talks to you as though he's talking to somebody but at the same time you know he's talking over your head - he doesn't listen to you. He'll ask you something and answer it himself - he doesn't want to know what your ... the old man doesn't even talk to you. Harry, he's just ... doesn't bother at all. It's not that I dislike him at all. I like them both (father and son) but they are that little way this that and the other - but they are not really talking to you, just ..."

While he thought that you tended to be treated as individual both in his yard and in racing generally, another respondent added this qualification:

> "But like most racing employers he tends to be a bit over-bearing you know the majority of them try and treat lads as they did thirty years ago, they don't live with the times. It's a question of

us and you sort of thing you know."

The perception of being treated as an individual then is by no means a certain guide to the extent of identity with the employer. There did seem to be a tendency though this cannot be accurately gauged from the data, for lads to associate being merely a 'number' with the bigger yards which were thought to be more impersonal. Needless to say in those yards commonly perceived as 'big' the distinction was not made. In one yard well staffed with over 70 horses an iconoclastic view was:

> "Well in racing you're just a number, you know, I think in all the yards you're just a number, even in this yard you know, that's why all the lads get a bit up tight about it you know, he respects the lads, he's alright like that but if I went in on Friday and handed my notice in he wouldn't be worried at all."

However, four of the respondents, colleagues from the same yard, took the opposing view. All had been with the present employer for at least four years and did not recognise the size of their yard as a significant factor in relationships with the employer. At the time of the survey there were only two other yards which were bigger operations in terms of horses and lads than this particular one.

Overall, then, while there is little doubt among the lads about the form of the relationship with the employer there is some ambivalence about its quality, certainly sufficient to forestall in the majority, a complete identity with him and even more so with the employers as a whole. Of interest here also for example, are the findings on the lads' attitudes towards absence from work. The same interview item as that deployed by Newby was used and hence on the face of it enabling a direct comparison. Respondents are asked to choose between two polar views on absence from work (see below). According to Newby responses to the question indicated patterns of

commitment to the farm and by implication to the employer. Among the farm workers fairly high levels of commitment appeared which did not vary with the type of farm organisation. From this the author concludes that evidence of a calculative attachment to work does not necessarily mean a weaker attachment.

Superficially data from the stable lads' survey is even less equivocal; 86% of the respondents felt that 'one shouldn't stay away from work unless it was necessary as in the case of illness', 8.6% agreed with the 'militant' statement as one lad called it, that 'it's a free country and people have the right to take a day off once in a while if they want to', and 5.2% thought that the alternatives were too crudely put. However, in contrast to the suggestion made by Ingham (1970) for example, this by no means represents a simple measure of attachment to the yard, employer or whatever. Unfortunately, probes on this issue were not formally recorded and coded but a qualitative reading of the data suggests that this pattern of response represents much more a recognition of the obligations of collective labour in a highly labour intensive work process where in an abstract sense a certain quantity of labour has to be performed, i.e. horses done whoever is at work to do them. When people do not turn up for work it simply means, given taken for granted norms, more work for colleagues. In practice, the extra horses will be distributed by the head lad and this can lead to a good deal of friction. The obligation, in other words seems to be perceived as an horizontal rather than a vertical one though such 'internalised discipline', mediated by the dependence of the animal, of course suits the employer well. Further, this seems such a strongly held view that it merits consideration as part of the occupational value system and culture, a point which is taken up in more detail with illustration in the next chapter.

Similarly double-edged was the apparent general willingness to approach the employer for advice over personal matters should the need ever arise. Over three-quarters (77.6%) indicated that such a possibility would be considered and some respondents gave me examples of situations where this had occurred in relation to financial or legal matters where a 'word' from an employer might help. One lad for example required the collusion of his employer in overstating the potential of his earnings in order to gain a mortgage. The dissenting minority often put the view forcefully, however. Not untypical was this reply:

> "No - but I'd ask to borrow a few quid and he'd lend it you as well but I don't think it's part of his job to worry about my home life."

Another put it this way:

> "No - he's not approachable in that way - though he's usually alright for a few quid - no problem - but he's not the sort of man you'd go up to and say 'look I'm having problems with my missus or anything like that; it'd be more likely the other way round, coming to you with his problems."

Both of these replies, however, evidence an element which seemed to run through the replies of the majority of respondents on this issue, namely the view of the employer not so much as a valued counsellor but as a source of practical help; quite visibly often, the employer is the most obvious person to turn to in those situations.[17] The following example is offered by a lad who otherwise had little truck with the employer and generally displayed a low level of attachment to his particular yard:

> "I would do because he's the kind of bloke that could probably help you ... you wouldn't have a conversation with him as I say, when you're riding out he's on his hack but not upsides with you having a chat - but I think if you had a bit of trouble you could go and see him. It's never happened but I think he would help you that's my opinion ... I'm not certain."

On balance it seemed that the request for help would be made on the basis of a consideration of the likely end result rather than as an extension of the natural confidence in a paternalistic employer though this would account for the stance of some lads.

In concluding some of the empirical evidence on worker/employer identity and attachment, some reference may be made to perceptions of future job possibilities. For example, nearly half of the respondents (44.8%) reported that they had contemplated leaving their present job. Of course it would be a mistake to exaggerate the significance of this as there are always 'downs' in any job which provoke spontaneous thoughts along these lines though as this lad emphasised they can be persistent:

> "At this yard? Yes practically everyday! The only reason is because I've been at Atty's for fourteen years (a previous stable) - I think I'd be the same wherever I went now - I just can't get back into that routine - hanging about - I hate hanging about. I do honestly. I can't abide it."

Nevertheless, it appeared from examples given that when lads replied in this way, the thought of leaving had been a serious one. In the context of relative job security, it seems reasonable to argue in view of the fact for example, that 89.6% of the sample had been in their present jobs less than five years and 48.2% less than two years, that most workers sooner or later think very seriously about leaving. Of those having thought that way, a fifth were actively doing something about it at the time and were able to relate their efforts on that score. These results may be compared with those obtained in the study by Curran (1978) of workers in small and large firms in the printing and electronics industries in Surrey.

Table 30 Thoughts about leaving job at the time of interview

	Stable Workers	All Small Pr./Elect.	All Large Pr./Elect.
Had thoughts about leaving job	44.8	66.0	57.0
Claimed to be seriously looking for another job	10.3	20.0	12.0
D.K./Incomplete information	-	-	1.0

Source for additional data: J. Curran (1978)

As is evident from the Table, stable workers in fact appear less ready to move than the other workers among whom, interestingly, small firm workers seem to be the most volatile in these terms. However, it seems likely that the stable workers, judging by actual mobility patterns discussed earlier, probably understated thoughts of moving. More broadly and contrary to conventional wisdom, workers in large firms are less ready to move because large firms are simply often better employers.

However, in the event that the sample roughly mirrors the trend in the racing population of Newmarket as a whole, it means that at any one time almost 10% of the population is actively looking for a new job either in or outside racing; scarcely the pattern of an accommodated, deferential workforce. There was little opportunity to systematically follow up the outcome of these intentions, however it was evident from my continuing contact with the lads that a good proportion had in fact materialised, including those of one 50 year old lad who left the game after thirty-five

years!

Some revealing data on attitudes to job security might also be briefly mentioned in this connection although they were chiefly designed to tap perceptions of the labour market. Subjects were asked how safe they thought their own job was. In bare terms 95% thought it safe, 52% 'dead safe'. However, it became evident that either the question or the manner of its asking was unclear because it seemed that 'job' was being interpreted in many instances as 'occupation' and as was confirmed by a later question. While the occupation was regarded as being relatively secure (one could always get a job in racing especially given the current market situation) one's own job might or might not be secure. One lad argued poignantly:

> "Well how can you ... how safe's any job at the moment. It seems like a brick wall at the moment, solid. But how many brick walls crumble. Like everything else, the owners have got to pay the bill - the bills keep going up, owners keep taking horses out. So when you start losing horses you've got to start losing staff."

Nevertheless, it seemed that the first recourse of the respondents in estimating their job security was to their occupational worth, their marketability rather than to the nature of their particular relationship with the employer. Of those who regarded their job as safe, only 22.6% referred to something like a particularistic response of the 'good employer' sort. Virtually two-thirds (62.3%) on the other hand referred to their own skill and value. Their confidence about job security it seems reasonable to suggest then, lies in their self-evaluation rather than in the capacity of a paternalistic employer, as traditionally, to 'look after' them.

Table 31	Reasons for thinking job was safe
	(n = 55) %
Individual's own skill and value to employer	62.3
Guv'nor is a 'good employer'	22.6
Successful yard	7.5
Labour situation	1.9
D.K.	5.7
	100.0

Conclusion

It has become something of a commonplace in discussions of worker orientations to emphasise the sublety and ambiguity of subjects' responses and perspectives, nevertheless it is a commonplace with which one must concur. However, it also seems that despite variation around the themes which have been discussed some patterns are evident. The reactions are not completely random and to some extent they refract the changing conditions of the race-horse training business in this particular community. In contrast to the situation of Newby's agricultural workers, changes affecting the work situation have not been broadly conducive to the maintenance of the traditionalist hegemony of the employers. In fact, quite the reverse is true though within an abbreviated time-scale, so that the effects or implications are by no means clear. However, it does seem as if traditionalist control is a much weaker shell of its former self; the employers often maintain the 'style' without the reality or the 'clout'. Hence, it has been seen that although the lads maintain a high emotional and affective commitment to their jobs, this is hedged about with what amounts to an enforced instrumentalism which transcends a commitment to a particular employer even though in the employment relationship itself, personal loyalties often

develop. Racing in other words generates strong loyalties and commitments but at the same time routinely stretches those ties to often unbearable limits. However, it may well be that the dilution of some aspects of the racing lads' work and the weakening of their mode of acquisition may be less productive of long term loyalties which may render the pressures on commitments even more problematic, further weakening traditional modes of control. Clearly, the strength of the lads' identity with their work sets them apart from many manual workers. However, their instrumental behaviour, confidence in their own abilities, emphasis on horizontal relations and autonomy in 'production', indicate that the continuities with other workers are at least as strong.

It will be shown in Chapter Eight that, historically speaking, employer-worker identity even under a more full blown traditionalist structure, has occasionally been problematic. However, it would be a mistake to read into that or into the data discussed here an oppositional stance. What seems to be more characteristic of this situation is an emphasis on independence, a separateness from rather than opposition to or a complete identity with the employers. This 'metier' as Davis (1979) would term it, of collective identity without opposition or solidarity has been sustained by the conditions of collective and concentrated labour which have generated an occupational culture and a relatively isolated occupational community fuelled by a constant stream of members from urban working class backgrounds. In the following chapter, the contours of this culture and community are mapped out drawing on further data on elements of work involvement and communal sociability. Following that the problem of collective organisation is discussed.

However, more generally, it can be seen that there are plenty of

instances which would support the 'outsiders' stereotypical view of the peculiar and intimidating nature or 'atmosphere' of the racing world epitomised, as this is in the eyes of many, in the racing stable. Equally, the commonsense impression of this milieu as one populated by all powerful, patriarchial figures and cowering, forelock tugging workers is at best overstated. Metaphorically speaking, forelocks are tugged ocassionally and the employers tend to be rather strident individuals but altered economic circumstances have encouraged a sharper appreciation of mutual dependencies which appear to have mollified the excesses of arbitrary power and the eccentricities which frequently accompany traditionalism in employment relationships. It is also apparent from this and other research in the area that the conventional sociological view of deferential comportment embodied in some discussions of the 'size effect' and aspects of working class culture, failed to appreciate the structural and economic basis of traditional authority (c.f. Norris, 1978), and thus also the fragility of so-called 'deference' in the context of the erosion of these bases or supports. Racing is still a good distance away from approaching the mainstream in employment relationships and its tendencies towards casualisation and the informality of economic relationships will continue to see it embedded in the secondary sector of employment. However, what is important is that the veneer of traditionalism and thus the special cultural output of racing seems to be becoming increasingly transparent.

Notes

1. It is possible for 'summary' phrases of this sort to obscure a range of meanings, however they were helpful and meaningful in broadly indicating respondents' preferences.

2. That is riding at three-quarters or virtually full racing speed.

3. While three-quarters of lads under 25 mentioned riding out just over half those between 30 and 40 did so; nobody over 40 singled out the riding.

4. Considerable effort has been invested by psychologists and 'management scientists' among others, in the methodology of 'job satisfaction' on which the literature is voluminous and in discussing the merits of this kind of question in particular. Generally the outcome is pessimistic. The validity of such items is questionable and it is easy to replicate many empiricist errors. All one can say here is that one has to be circumspect in making inferences from the data and that these replies need to be seen in the context of the total relation of the worker to work which we are attempting to elaborate.

5. In the way indicated for example by Blauner (1967). See also Goldthorpe et al (1969).

6. As explained in the previous chapter, yearlings arrive normally at the stable from the sales or studs near the end of their second official year (where their official is the 1st January of the year of their actual birth) though in fact they may be only 18 months old. They may be broken in at the studs at the yard. After this period when being 'ridden away' they are liable to unpredictable behaviour as they encounter new stimuli but still retain their juvenile habits, rearing up, bucking etc. The great fear with the yearlings is that they will rear up and fall back on the rider - a not infrequent occurrence especially with fillies which are not built to rear and carry a rider's weight at the same time. Again it is the uncertainty and unpredictability which is unnerving. Although a good horseman will 'feel' when his mount is about to behave out of the ordinary, even the most experienced find themselves thrown before realising it.

7. Gouldner (1954) has termed this widespread tendency the 'Rebecca Myth'. This tendency is also noted by Nichols and Armstrong (1976) of their 'northern foreman'.

8. Three-quarters of the single lads for example thought their take home pay would have to increase by at least a third to ensure a reasonable standard of living if married with say 2 children.

9. Surprisingly, the neo-classical model also paid little attention to the literature on occupational choice and placement which has led one writer for instance to suggest that "Despite the existence of a nominally free labour market, individuals do not typically choose their jobs in any meaningful sense; they simply take what is available". (Roberts, 1975, p. 138). Typically occupational choice and placement is a haphazard process hedged by constraint; involuntary mobility and employer strategies, as a study of workers in prosperous Surrey has recently shown (Curran and Stanworth, 1979). See also Blackburn and Mann (1979).

10. When measured against labour stability rates generally among the manual working class that of the stable workers may not appear to be very high. However, it is at least comparable to other occupations and it should be remembered that the population is a relatively young one, the average age of the sample for example was just over 31 years (c.f. Curran, 1979b).

11. Eaton's (1976) argument is discussed more fully in Chapter Eight.

12. This finding is similar to that of Goldthorpe et al (1969) where only a minority of workers claimed to have more than two close friends at work and to the findings of Curran and Stanworth (1979) in a study of small and large firm workers.

13. However, more recently studies have begun to compute the effect of management and employer strategies, for example, Beynon (1972), Nichols and Beynon (1977), Friedman (1977). See also the research on the size effect by Curran and Stanworth (1978, 1979 and 1979b).

14. The figure for the stable workers is also high compared with that of the 'small firm' workers studied by Curran (1979a). It seems likely that given the overall poor evaluation of employers in the industry, an employer who meets even some of workers expectations will be thrown into relief with enhanced esteem.

15. Newby (1977a), p. 33.

16. Again there is the potential problem that subjects may be reluctant to report situations which involve possible loss of self esteem. Given the ambivalence in the replies this seems a likely context for this to happen.

17. Recent evidence supports this interpretation and indicates that it is of more widespread relevance. Curran and Stanworth (1979).

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE OCCUPATIONAL COMMUNITY OF THE STABLEWORKER

Introduction

The life of workers in the main training centres of the racing industry approximates to a structure of relationships which in recent times has earned the label of an occupational community. Though brief, the career of this concept to date has been a rather chequered one. Definitionally it has encompassed a number of varying features which naturally enough have reflected the theoretical and methodological prejudices of its proponents. For some it has represented a convenient sociographical resume, for others an explanatory concept of quite intimidating power.[1]

Much of the work on its development and the ensuing debates was fostered by the Weberian tradition in British sociology, especially its concern with social consciousness and its determination, an interest itself very much stimulated by the work of Lockwood (1966). However, some notion of an occupational community was implicit in many occupational studies carried out in this country in the 1950's and 60's for example by Hollowell (1962) on lorry drivers, Tunstall (1962) on deep-sea fishermen, Sykes (1969) on navvies and Scott et al and Dennis et al (1956) on miners, but ironically the first systematic if brief attempt at a definition was provided by the American, Blauner (1967) writing in a quite different context. [2] Blauner's summary definition, revolving around collegiate non-work socialising, shop talk and occupational referencing, found its way into some subsequent discussions but with seemingly little attention being given to the weighting of factors or their interrelation.

Allcorn and Marsh (1975) for example, illustrating the range of features said to characterise occupational communities, pointed to the possibility that some of these, shop talk for example, could in some circumstances be dependent and secondary factors rather than independent variables. The authors argued with some justification that it was far from clear in the literature precisely what occupational communities were communities of! Added to these problems of course were the conceptual pitfalls associated with the concept of 'community', itself one with a considerable and difficult history (Bell and Newby, 1972; Salaman, 1974).

In addition to the definitional problem was that of the theoretical status and explanatory power of the concept. Some writers have used 'occupational community' for example to explain differential strike frequencies between industries (Kerr and Siegal, 1954). However, the most common context of discussion has been in terms of the issues of social consciousness, political allegiances and collective organisation and opposition. The most well known excursion along these lines was taken by Lockwood (1966). In his legendary article the author suggested that working class occupational communities exhibited an amalgam of work and community factors especially conducive to the development of traditional proletarian consciousness; a characteristic attitudinal dispostion towards the whole social structure; solidaristic patterns of action in the face of antagonistic forces and so on. This was contrasted with another 'traditional' working class orientation, the traditional deferential, anchored in its own distinctive work and community milieux.

The numerous empirical studies which the article and this contention in particular stimulated, quickly brought to light the problems with this conceptual framework though they need not be rehearsed in full here.

However, one writer (Davis, 1979) summarising these studies has suggested that:

> "It is abundantly clear from these and other accounts of traditional proletarian communities that such milieux are not necessarily a source of radical views or class specific images of society." (p. 25)

For example, studies of farmworkers (Bell and Newby, 1973; Newby, 1977a) and shipbuilders (Cousins and Brown, 1975) found considerable variations in imagery within supposedly single communities. The problem was that although it was insisted that Lockwood's typology was essentially heuristic, it nevertheless made little historical sense. Not only was this evident in the studies cited above but also, for example, in those by Moore (1975) and Cousins and Davis (1975) on Durham and Northumberland miners which failed to confirm the argument with regard to historical patterns of action.[3] The consciousness of these subjects was parochial, adaptive, accomodative and in no meaningful sense proletarian. In effect both the nature and the consequences of occupational communities had been romanticised. An equally significant weakness of the approach was its neglect, indeed its virtual denial of the role of the output of national, cultural institutions on consciousness, the effect of which was to cast further doubt on the supposed monotonic relationship between consciousness and experience or milieux.

Perhaps two further points are worth mentioning. The first is that largely because of the choice of examples, the discussion of both the nature and aeteology of occupational communities was dogged by the exception rather than the rule. For example, the concentration on single industry communities which as Davis argues was a rarity if at all a reality and the conjucture of physical and/or social isolation. False leads were perhaps inevitable following such a beginning. Secondly, much of the work on which

extrapolation was based was in the form of case study material when what was clearly needed to sustain such hypotheses was comparative work between such communities.

However, the significance of the occupational community has also been asserted in another, though related, direction. Cannon (1967) for example, argued that the maintenance of a radical ideology among compositors in the face of rising and substantial affluence in the post-war period could be accounted for by the role that traditional labourist allegiances played in the occupational culture of the printers. Such allegiances were thus dependent on the involvement of workers in the occupational community. In fact, this ingenious study is not convincing on this point. The history of the compositors (one indeed confirmed since the study) demonstrates that in the face of the virtually continual threat of insecurity brought about by innovation and technical change with which printers have waged a three hundred year old battle, organisation and solidarity are a necessity and 'radical' politics by no means as spurious as the author suggests.

However, whatever the merits of this argument, it is evident that considerable weight has been accorded the concept of occupational community. It is almost certain, however, that this significance is too much for the concept to bear and that it is prone to divert attention away from the operation of other perhaps more important factors, as in the above example. Alternatively, it may be as Davis suggests more generally:

> "that the local community is at least as important as the research tradition allows but that the emphasis on shared experiences, especially on attachments in the work group which spill over into non-work activities, is misplaced except in rare isolated cases. Greater emphasis should be placed on relationships between groups within the community and the use of local reference groups."
>
> (Davis, 1979, p. 180)

In any event the original formulations were clearly over-ambitious.

Some attempt to rescue the notion from its definitional confusion and to place it within a more modest analytical context is provided by Salaman (1971, 1974) in a comparative study of railwaymen and architects. Systematically elaborating components and determinants of occupational communities, Salaman argues that the notion essentially revolves around the relationship between work and non-work such that members of occupational communities:

> "see themselves in terms of their occupational role: their self image is centred on their occupational role in such a way that they see themselves as printers, policemen, army officers, or whatever, and as people with specific qualities, interests and abilities. Secondly, members of occupational communities share a reference group composed of members of the occupational community. Thirdly, members of occupational communities associate with, and make friends of, other members of their occupation in preference to having friends who are outsiders, and they carry work activities and interests into their non-work lives."
>
> (Salaman, 1974, p. 21)

The author's discussion of the determinants of occupational communities is rather equivocal and in some respect tautological [4] but the framework outlined will be a useful one to follow in evoking some of the ambience of the racing industry as epitomised in the interests, loyalties, and frustrations generated among the racing workforce in Newmarket. The emphasis here, therefore, will be mainly sociographic but there are some analytical points to be made concerning the occupation and collective organisation which will be taken up more fully in the next chapter.

Self and Occupation

An essential component of an occupational community as defined by Salaman

(1974) is that members disply an image of themselves in terms of their occupational role; the job forms an important part of the individual's identity. This feature is immediately apparent to any close observer of such occupations but it is difficult to frame precise indices. Obviously, questions which enquire directly after a person's self-image are likely to have little validity. Not surprisingly then, when Salaman asked his respondents a direct question as to whether they in fact saw themselves as architects or railwaymen, he encountered some difficulties. Respondents seemed forced into a situation in which they could scarcely deny it or take up the alternative descriptions of simply 'professionals' and 'workers'. While they were not asked directly, there is no doubt that workers in racing stables see themselves in terms of that role, one summed up in the term 'racing lad', they are racing lads first, workers second. As noted in the previous chapter, the majority of lads (78%) thought that their kind of work with thoroughbred racehorses was 'special'[5]. It is a role which they personally value. The common 'outsiders' term 'stable lad' appears to be less fashionable now among the lads themselves, in early interviews where questions were framed in terms of the former, replies were often couched in terms of 'racing lads'. It is a slight preference but the term 'racing lad' seems to be felt to better reflect the nature of the job and the attachment to it.

Generally speaking, when lads come into racing they come to work <u>in racing</u> not primarily in 'stables', though that is where a lot of labour time is naturally spent. This term also serves to mark off the specialist nature of the job distinguishing it from work in a hunting stable, for example. It also helps to elevate the role from the low status associations of work in stables which, as we shall see later, is very keenly felt by workers in the industry.

What may seem curious is that the focus of these labels should be on

the content of the role rather than the relationship which it obviously embodies in the term 'lad' with its subordinate overtones (the corresponding term in the United States is 'boy'[6]). It might be added here that, although work in racing stables is with some justification often seen as a young, single man's occupation, the term 'lad' refers to workers of all ages and intermediate statuses: head lad and travelling lad for example. Eaton (1976) also mentions, with some relish, that the term also applies to females in racing, though this does not imply that they are necessarily regarded as equals. Certainly the apparent influx of females into racing in response to the 'labour problem' is a bone of contention among male and, impressionistically, especially older male lads. In any event, the girls appear to accept the term as applied to them with few qualms, indeed the opposite might be true as the term constitutes a mark of 'acceptance'.

The status of girls in the occupational community is as yet somewhat uncertain, as they are bound to be threatening to those at the bottom of what has been traditionally a male occupation. However, whether or not they are regarded as equals, they have been accorded a place in the occupational hierarchy through an ingenious adaption of notions of gender to the conditions of racing work. Hence, while it is assumed that girls will not be strong riders, their feminine disposition and 'natural' leanings towards caring, sympathy, gentleness and so on, means that they are generally well-suited to the job of looking after fillies. Racing folk knowledge has traditionally viewed fillies as typically more temperamental and physically weaker than the colts, requiring gentler handling and deep reserves of patience. The scientific basis of this distinction, as with most racing 'truisms', is rather dubious and in fact, of course, the traditional description itself borrowed heavily on received notions of gender differences and in this sense the gender prophecy is doubly fulfilled. Some accounts of this

adaption of females to racing work are also prone to add some rather lurid details of the distracting effects of the presence of females on young colts whose sexual aspirations are said to be stirred by such proximity! In any event, employers appear to have acceded to this creative adaption of gender definition, as females are typically allocated fillies and geldings to look after. This was the case with five of the six girls interviewed, for example. The sixth had, over the years, developed a special relationship with a full horse which subsequently went to stud - where he was an abject failure; hence somewhat peversely confirming the conventional wisdom!

The important point, however, is that girls retain their identity as 'lads' but with their own special qualities which in their own way make them valuable members of the yard and gives them a place in the community, if it is by no means one of complete equality.

However, in suggesting his observation Eaton ignores the point that the term 'lad' has historically embodied a quite definite view of the status of the worker in racing vis-a-vis his employer. To a large extent the term symbolises the nature of the relationship in the very recent past before traditional authority and deference began to be eroded by various economic and other developments discussed earlier. However, the symbolic content is by no means empty still. Its significance today has much to do with the fact that the term 'lad' is seen precisely in a neutral and unobtrusive way; the incongruity of references to steel lads or mining lads, for example, is obvious.

Hence there is something of a contradiction in the heart of the self-image of the racing workers - while emphasising the specialist nature of the work and the skills required by it and while hypersensitive to relative

status deprivation, the racing lads 'choose' an occupational title which apparently legitimates and romanticises their own inferior position.

The term 'lad' is freely available to workers in the industry, the most recent apprentice is a 'lad'. However, implicitly there is the expectation that the lad is serving or has served his time and is a skilled worker and tradesman. There are also lads - and lads or more to the point - lads and 'dossers'. The concept of a 'dosser', frequently mentioned in interviews and conversations, serves as a downward reference point for 'good' lads which tends to indicate that there is some elusive but real view of what constitutes a bona-fide racing lad - a typical worker with the right qualities and experience. This is illustrated by the argument of one (among a number) older lads in the context of a question about lads' attachment to their horses:

> "There are still quite a lot of lads about - dedicated, good lads who do (get attached) but it's deteriorated very fast over the last 8-10 years..."

and in reply to a later inquiry on the managerial style of the trainer:

> "Very easy going, if you can't work for a bloke like him I don't know how easy you're going to get a job after that - unless you want to be an A1 dosser altogether you know."

The notions of the 'good lad' and 'dosser' will be returned to later in the discussion.

However, in achieving the 'racing lad' status, important milestones are having a first ride in public, 'doing your first winner' and 'finishing your time', an occasion which is often marked by a change of yard. Having at least one ride in public was something which helped to fertilise the strong

occupational identity though it is by no means a universal privilege. Asked whether he thought he had 'received a fair crack of the whip' as an apprentice this twenty-three year old lad replied:

> "Well, I did you know, I know people who haven't even cantered up to the start, you know ... people who haven't even been on a racehorse. I know lads who rode 30 and 40 winners and never got anywhere and they're no better off than I am now you know."

One ride is as good as 100 if 'you don't make it'; making the same kind of point in a different way another lad argued:

> "No ... I didn't get any rides ... (and sardonically) I'm a failure! ... ", but he went on: " I would like one ride so that I can say 'I've done it like you know."

A middle-aged lad with a family and hoping to negotiate his way out of racing because of a rheumatoid complaint also recalled the symbolic importance of a ride:

> "One ride ... I didn't really start riding until I finished, I got that one ride. It was the toss of a coin between me and this other lad and he always used to get the heads and I would get the tails ... I rode it the day after he rode it at Yarmouth ... the horse ran two days on the run so I had no chance before I started, it was just to ride in public."

At this stage lads know they're not going to make it and the time has long passed since they were impressed with trainers' promises - but they need to have a go, they could possibly have made it given the breaks. Where 55% of lads interviewed had less than 10 rides during their apprenticeship, the ride in pubic serves important individual rationalising functions and provides a continuing, if fine thread of identity with the game in the bleaker times ahead. It is extremely common for lads to be able to recall the exact number of rides they had had, a point raised with one Scottish lad who with

typical Scots economy volunteered, "aye you remember them all."

The first ride is usually remembered with some pride and affection:

> "It's funny that actually ... I'd only been there two years and there were quite a lot of apprentices above me who hadn't got rides and one afternoon (the trainer) came up to me and says "What you doing Saturday afternoon?" ... I said "nothing, why?". "Good", he says, "cancel everything because you're going to ride this horse at Newmarket, now get on the 'phone and ring your Mum, it's on the T.V." Well I was thrilled to bits, it was my own horse as well, big black horse ... but that didn't put me in favour with other apprentices, I'd only been there five minutes according to them. Anyway my parents watched it ... they thought I was a jockey! ... Kevin's on the box ... in colour. It was a big thing."

This then is the time when the lads feel they have arrived; though subsequent 'failure' is such a common feature that feet are usually kept pretty well on the ground about future prospects. Nevertheless, that first ride in public helps to cement the bond with the occupation.

Equally, while as we have seen in the previous chapter there is a strong affective attachment to the job, witnessed by the large number of lads who finally come back into racing after a spell of earning more realistic wages elsewhere, the lads remain fairly circumspect about it and on the whole refrain from romanticising the job. It is the outsiders who see the glamour side of the job, leading in the Derby winner for example (although even that is something the owners like to do!) and so on; they, naturally, are more likely to stress the toil, danger and skill involved in producing the horse for racing - in the winter when people have temporarily forgotten about the 'flat'. As one lad, a specialist work-rider, put it:

> "...they read in the paper that Lester Piggott rode a big winner in Singapore or wherever he is during the winter, so and so is out in India ... they probably think that because flat racing is finished here that we've got a kind of easy time during the winter but that's really when the work is done, that's when racing is at its

most dangerous."

While there is a sort of esprit de corps among the lads, thrown into relief by acute feelings of marginality which are discussed later, the lads also have a fairly unromantic view of their number as a whole. An individual will often distance himself from his colleagues when referring to trouble in the town, fighting, drinking, creating a nuisance and so on. Sixty-two percent of the lads thought that on the whole, the locals in Newmarket regarded them unfavourably. Generally speaking this was thought to be unfair, reflecting an exaggerated picture of trouble in the town, on the other hand it had to be admitted that it was not totally without foundation.

> "The majority are branded because of the few, you get the odd rotton apple and the rest are tarred with the same brush."

and

> "There's a lot of trouble with the lads but you've got to expect that. A lot of them are young, away from home, bit of money in their pockets, you're bound to get it."

It is very difficult, of course, to find anyone ready to admit to being a 'dosser' or a 'piss artist', two frequently used terms.

Lads have few illusions about themselves in other, perhaps more significant, ways. For example, a popular reason for the widely held view that there was little chance of drastic improvement in wages in the industry was the lack of solidarity perceived among the lads and their individualism.

> "...there's no solidarity ... until there is you aren't going to have any big leap forward on the scale of pay or anything like that ... they go around moaning about their wages on Friday but you ask them to come in to do something about it..."

This was a fairly representative view of a younger lad a year out of his time. Nobody pretends that the lads are 'God's gift to humanity', the attitude is 'this is the way we are, take us or leave us! Many do leave but a good majority seem to wind their way back:

> "Well I don't like Newmarket, I never have done but I didn't half miss it when I was away from it - the lads and that ... if I was going to leave it would be to go abroad, I wouldn't go anywhere else ... because I fit in here."

Here of course it is difficult to separate the attachment to the job and the job in this particular environment but this sort of sentiment was echoed by a large proportion of lads and may be seen therefore as an indicator of the strength of the occupational identity and of the local occupational community as a reference point. Many lads would empathise with the feelings of this married North Country lad:

> "Well it's funny every time you go home for a holiday you look forward to leaving Newmarket and going home, yet when you get there I always look forward to coming back!"

Further evidence of the circumspection with which the typical lad views his role is provided by the picture painted of their occupational future. In answer to the question 'What do you see yourself doing in say ten years?', there seemed to be a general reluctance to positively endorse the prospect of still 'doing one's two', (now a euphemistic phrase), in ten years' time. About one-fifth (19%) thought that they would be out of racing altogether by then, mainly because of financial reasons in the face of family responsibilities. For some older lads who had survived this crisis the thought of doing your two, riding out every day, was also not an endearing prospect:

> "I know I've left it four times, got different jobs and that but I'm getting to the age now you know, 39 this year, the kids are growing up ... I suppose I'm thinking about getting a steadier job ...

> as you get older your reflexes get slower, well definitely they must get slower therefore you can't ride as well as you used to know and falls come harder, a lot of them start to lose their nerve; luckily I haven't lost mine yet, if I did I'd leave the game straight away, be a question of having to do that because that's when you get hurt when your nerve goes..."

To be still doing your two also implies that you haven't 'got on' and while I came across no lad with a craving for the Head Lad's job - 'the worst job in the yard' - many fancied a 'nice little travelling job', i.e. as travelling head lad. One of the more ambitious lads for example thought he would still be in racing:

> "but in a better position with a decent head on my shoulders ... and make a go of it ... I've got no attachments really, it wouldn't bother me to go away and not come back for another ten years."

Few lads would admit to wanting to be stable lads for the rest of their lives, though in answer to the 'ten year question' rather more (36.2%) saw this as a probability, as prospects of occupational mobility, for example to travelling head lad, are not very good. Labour turnover rates do mean, however, that these jobs are now probably more accessible than ever for those willing to play the right cards.

Financial considerations and other disappointments often place a severe strain on the attachment to the job and occupational identity. Virtually all the lads I talked to out of their time, had gone out of the game at one time or another, often just to see what it was like to earn a 'decent wage', often by necessity forced on them by family responsibilities. A striking fact about my sample was the relatively low proportion of lads interviewed between the ages of 30-40. The 'official' figures discussed in Chapter Four indicate that this is not a quirk of the sampling procedure and it almost certainly reflects a life-cycle effect, though it should be stressed that the

proportion of older workers declines rapidly after the age of 30. This is precisely the time when extrinsic considerations place greatest pressure on continued attachment to the role. One worker, a dedicated and enthusiastic 'professional' and a single man of 35, hence one of the exceptions, reported:

> "Yeah I did take a break, twice I left racing and I went into one of the local factories ... a box factory. I was on the night shift and I only did that so I could say I've done another job. I lasted there about four or five months and then I went into the Sprite caravan factory ... that was only for about four or five weeks."

A younger married lad without a family recalled:

> "I did work in the factory assembling caravans, I've worked in the building industry for over a year."

and another

> "I got out for about six months ... worked on a building site."

Reflecting the persisting 'casual' element of employment in racing, another older married lad recalled doing a "little bit of scaffolding during the slack period ... on the motorways doing a bit of pipe laying ... where our weekly bonus was more than a stable lad's wage."

Of course, these lads have returned, many more, as the 'official' figures on age distribution indicate, to the industry and the line between those who stay and those who go on, argued in the previous chapter, is a very thin one. A number of the lads interviewed were seriously thinking of leaving the industry at the time of the interview and were doing something about it. One had been for an interview for a job that day to be turned down because he reportedly did not have a union card and I subsequently learned that one of my respondents had in fact, as intimated during the interview, left racing

after twenty-nine years with the same employer, apparently without 'bye or leave' on either side.

Hence it is clear that although the racing lads have a strong affective attachment to their trade and to the game and a self image defined very heavily in terms of occupational role, this attachment has its limits and it has its price. Also, many lads view their occupation with an unusual degree of circumspection which serves to deflate the romanticism which many outsiders attribute to the job. As one lad put it in an aside, though a trifle extremely:

> "You could get a crowd of lads in this room now and you ask for a show of hands and overall 75% would be different to the other 25%, 75% might be right bastards you know ..."

In fact to diverge and take up this lad's observation , it is a not uncommon belief that the lads' opinion will differ widely although it is inaccurate and at least as many lads who quizzed me on this expected that I was getting very similar replies, reflecting the view that the world of racing is a close and relatively closed one.

Status Perceptions and Marginality

However, compared with the railwaymen and architects studied by Salaman (1974) for example, the lads are not at great pains to assert their distinctiveness as a group of people except, as will be seen in the next chapter, in the context of collective organisation. Distinctive though they undoubtedly are, there was very little of the "we're a race apart ..." type of sentiment said to be typical of railwaymen, for example. Perhaps we can do some violence to an old addage and suggest that the more people palpably are 'a race apart' the less they need to want to proclaim it. In the case of

lads, of course, social and occupational distinctiveness is also often symbolised physically. In any event the type of distinctiveness which is alluded to, is connected first and foremost with the type of work which the racing lad does, 'doing' thoroughbred racehorses. It has already been seen that on the whole lads see themselves as doing a specialised job. This feeling was also typically linked to acute feelings of status deprivation, i.e. the skills were neither recognised nor rewarded properly. Here are a number of typical examples:

> "Yeah I would - I don't think with racing, lads are credited - they're credited as labourers more or less - but I don't think you can fetch a man off a building site or out of a factory and put him in a racing yard and in 6 weeks he can do a racing man's job - whereas most lads in a racing yard, you can put them in factory, stick them behind a machine, and they class them as semi-skilled."
>
> "I would think it was special you know, you've got to have a little bit of quality, you've got to know a bit."
>
> "Yes definitely, it takes a certain kind of skill, it's a very skilled job ..."

and so on.

However, some of the older lads offer a more qualified appraisal in view of the intensification of labour and consequent deskilling which has taken place in the last decade or so.

> "Well it used to be when it was done well - it's simply because you've got far too many horses to do and you can't do them properly everything suffers I think, the horse suffers everything suffers through it. We muck out into the passage and the tractor sweeps it through - because of the labour situation - we muck out four horses in the morning and ride out three and sometimes four - well there's no way you could do it if you was having to carry the muck away and we've also got two people who go around after we've gone who shake the beds and do the box and that - if you had to do it there's no way you could get through, no chance"

argued a lad who had served his time with Captain Boyd Rochfort. Similar

points were made by a lad of the same generation having served his time with Harry Wragg, intimating that the increased work load offended his pride "being in the category that I am, a skilled man after an apprenticeship."

The decline of the traditional apprenticeship systems and the accompanying dilution of the occupation is perceived as a threat to this 'skilled identity'. On the whole though, the lads regard the job as a specialised occupation whose skill base goes largely unrecognised within and without the industry. This occupationally based distinctiveness is reinforced socially in two ways, one negatively and the other positively. Firstly, for example, although Newmarket has been a racing town for more than two centuries, most of the lads (62%) thought that the racing employees were regarded unfavourably by the local non-racing population, the racing lads were the 'untouchables' of Newmarket, this represents another aspect of marginality of the occupation and may be more or less applicable to the other racing centres. On the other hand, people outside of racing towns were felt to take a much more favourable view, for example when lads went away racing or for a visit back home, they were often treated as minor celebrities or at least as different. As one lad, echoing the sentiments of many, remembered of his apprenticeship days:

> "I find out of a racing centre it's something entirely different, we were in a little village just outside Swindon ... just little kids and we could go into any shop, any pub - could be skint they'd take pity on us - if you were getting a couple of rides they all thought you were jockeys, you were something different - they didn't get many stable lads in their pubs or lads getting rides - plenty of bricklayers, plumbers and road sweepers and what have you, ordinary run of the mill jobs - I think you are accepted more in a place like that because you are something different out of a racing centre."

Another young lad seemed to put his finger poetically on exactly the right word:

> "Well it's good because you're doing a heroic job like you know - when I go home, immediately I'm a jockey ..."

and again:

> "Oh yes, like when I go away for week-ends people come up to you and ask about racing. They only see the glamour of the jobs, 99% of them don't have a clue what the job is like."

or:

> "Well they think it's great to belong to a racing stable - like you say when you go away from Newmarket people want to know you - when they don't see you everyday ..."

These represent typical experiences for most lads. A racing pass[9] will also open many doors like those a of Midlands night club which seems to have a standing invitation to lads visiting the nearby track. Most lads could tell a comparable story to that of a lad befriended by two 'plainclothes' police officers in a night club and then proceeded to spend the rest of the night touring the nightspots of a northern town in a squad car! Hence racing lads have their distinctive, occupational identity continually reaffirmed in the course of everyday life.

In addition to these elements of marginality the racing lads also experience quite acute feelings of relative status deprivation. One of the most explicit indications of this was provided by responses to a leading question which asked respondents to comment upon a statement by a stable lad quoted in a Sunday newspaper to the effect that the lads were the 'invisible men' of racing.[10] It would be difficult to exaggerate the empathy and eloquence which this implied complaint of lack of recognition evoked in respondents. In only two cases was there any need for the statement to be

elaborated and it was one with which the vast majority of subjects (92.4%) concurred in a disapproving vein. It was quite clear that they believed that the contribution of the lad to the final product went largely unrecognised and while this did have material implications, it was a slight felt largely in status terms. Most respondents could give elaborate examples from their own experience and the following is a fairly typical example:

> "Oh yes, definitely. In fact we were only on about that this morning and one of the lads, he's been in racing a long, long time and all he's got to show for it was a silver cigarette case one of the owners had given him ... Well ... I did the winner in the Diamond stakes last year and the jockey got a gold thing with a diamond necklace, the owner got something, the trainer got something, everybody got something apart from the lad who did it ... Oh yes, they really are the invisible men in some things."

This respondent, in fact, went on at some length to ferret out the dimensions of 'invisibility' and, for example, reported the consternation in his yard which greeted a television interview with a well-known trainer who, exceptionally, had the grace to deflect the praise for his training of one particular horse onto the lad whose patience and dedication had made its victory possible. In the above and many other examples, the grievance is aired in material terms but it seemed clear that this was because presents and gifts are the most tangible form of recognition and they therefore had a symbolic 'status' significance, as well as being welcome additions to income. One lad pointed out, however, that the level of wages was perhaps the best indicator of the recognition accorded the racing lad.

While it would be a mistake to exaggerate these aspects of status deprivation, they are, nevertheless, sufficiently strong both in relation to other participants in the racing business and to the local population, to constitute the type of marginalising factor which Salaman sees as a determinant of occupational communities. It encourages an insularity and

'inward lookingness' on the part of the occupational members and reinforces the distinctiveness of self image and occupational values. Marginality and occupational inclusiveness are, however, only determinant when combined with the necessary feature of 'work involvement' which was discussed at some length in the previous chapter. The strong involvement of the racing lads in their work and racing is evident enough and is reflected in a number of ways discussed above; however, it is also apparent in the relative unanamity over certain work-related values.

The 'Good Racing Lad'

Like other members of occupational communities, racing lads have a fairly clear picture of the qualities of a 'good lad'. A direct question was asked in respect of this issue: 'What do you think is the most important quality of a good stable lad? Overall, there was a marked tendency to stress factors which might be defined as the correct approach to work rather than any technical skills. Younger lads did seem more prone to stress the technical aspect of riding well, all who did so in fact were under the age of 25. The majority of lads, on the other hand, emphasised qualities such as giving a lot of care and attention to the horses, reliability, dedication and overwhelmingly, patience.[12]

Table 32 Qualities of a Good Racing Lad

	(n = 58) %
Patience	44.8
A lot of care and attention to horses	20.7
Good rider	17.2
Dedication	10.3
Reliability	5.2
D.K.	1.7
	100.0

The 'deportment' factors are often only artificially separated as the following respondent illustrates:

> "Dedication, if you're not dedicated it's just not worth doing - if you lose interest, your caring about your animals, your patience, your attitude ... it's all wrapped up in dedication ... once that crumbles that affects your judgement, your character ... once you lose that you lose the lot."

Reflecting the power of occupational socialisation, this kind of view was also expressed by the more instrumentally minded lad, which implies that this value is not a simple reflection of attachment to the job. For example, one lad, a twenty-six year old Scot, disenchanted, cynical, and who would have left the game for another £15 per week, retained a conventional view:

> "Well that's hard - it doesn't mean that you have to be a good rider ... dedication, I would say dedication ... if you're going to be a stable lad you've got to be dedicated ... you've got to be there on time, look after your horses properly."

While the literal meanings of dedication and patience are some distance removed, in this context they are evidently aspects of the same general approach to the work as the following remarks indicate:

> "Patience I think, patience yeah, because there are so many things ... like you get a horse trying to kick your teeth in every so often, you've got to have patience to try to get him to think another way sort of thing ..."

and:

> "You must have patience, that is the most important thing you must have because they really get you riled up horses do, you know, especially at first, but if you've got patience and time you can get them round to your way of thinking, that's the most important thing you have to have in racing to be a stable lad ..."
>
> "A good racing lad is a bloke with plenty of patience, looks after his horses well, makes sure it doesn't get hurt in any way, you know, you don't see someone else riding it and giving it a good

> hiding ... or someone going in the box and giving it a bloody good booting or something you know ..."
>
> "Good patience ... patience is one of the things that you've got to have with animals, a bad-tempered, impatient man is no good with horses ... quite quiet and good patience to be a good stableman."

The prescriptive element in all this is fairly clear and it is not blandly assumed that patience is a widely dispersed virtue, it is not seen by any means to be a universal characteristic of lads. This is also an issue which exposes a point of differentation within the occupation on a generational axis as older lads are more likely to point to what they see as the lack of patience and other qualities among younger lads. As noted in the previous chapter, to some extent this is an expression of normal generational prejudices though this may be concommitant of the 'deskilling' process discussed earlier and thus may have some, if partial, basis in reality. However, younger lads are also quite ready to point to character deficiencies on this score among their colleagues as intimated in the following:

> "you get lads go in ..? kick it in the guts ... 'kick it?! ... this sort of thing ... but if you've got patience you can get around a lot of things, like I say, working with animals they're only as good as they've been taught ... if they get taught well as yearlings you can't have too bad a horse really ... Patience I would say most definitely."

A fifty-year old lad already quoted above was less equivocal if he does put the old guard's case a little strongly:

> "Patience to be a stable lad ... and that's what 80% of them haven't got."

and more sympathetically from a Head Lad:

> "Patience ... that's what lacking now and I don't think it's so much the lads' fault because they've got to cram in so much work in to so short a time ... one lad to two horses, it wasn't so bad then but

now doing four, once you start you're going until you stop ..."

This respondent was also able to talk with some reflexivity about the generational phenomenon and recalled the older lads in his apprentice days lampooning new arrivals in the yard with the 'you've never had it so good' kind of arguments.

Patience and caring and, secondarily, dedication, though it amounts to very much the same thing, are regarded as essential characteristics of the good stablelad although they are also seen as a relatively scarce resource. There is thus an overwhelming emphasis on aspects of approach of demeanour towards the job rather than aspects of technical skill such as riding ability, for example, although younger lads appeared more likely to mention technical qualities such as 'a good pair of hands'.[13] No doubt they will adopt the 'correct' view as they grow older.

To a certain extent this points to the small element of rationalisation exhibited by this pattern of views. For the younger lads, especially apprentices, still with the slimmest chance of becoming a jockey, the ability to ride well is likely to be a much more salient feature of involvement in the job. For the vast majority of lads for whom public race riding is a long deserted dream, shipwrecked on the rocks of broken promises and late nights, other aspects of the job become more important. This legitimates their continued involvement, in spite of their 'failure' to make the grade as a race rider and in the face of real financial deprivations. It would, however, be a mistake to over-emphasise the elements of rationalisation such as they are. In a sense the riding is the sine qua non of the occupation, a taken-for-granted assumption; one should be able to ride competently as (following one's apprenticeship) a matter of course. Also, as mentioned

already, the riding is the 'name of the game' and of the lads who singled out one factor (78%) the majority of these (74%) state that riding is the thing they enjoy most in the job. Naturally also, characteristics such as patience and dediction interplay with technical skills. Much of the racing lad's role is educative; teaching the horse to settle on the canter, for example, can only be achieved effectively by a rider with patience, composure and confidence. A patient rider then is likely to be a good rider and a competent and confident rider will also be patient with his animal though this is not to be confused with being soft; without patience:

> "... you can ruin their mouths like, you may get a bit of a nasty tempered block well as soon as the horse moves he starts checking it you know pulling its mouth about you know ... digging it up the guts or smacking it with the whip ..." and so on.

The intersubjectively established view of the 'good lad' is thrown into relief by the obverse notion of the 'dosser'. This negative reference point encapsulates all the undesirable characteristics of the lads, real or fictional, in one stereotype. All the lads, of course, will want to distance themselves from this model. The 'dosser' so-called then is likely to have a very unstable employment pattern and is particularly prone to find other work during the winter months. Experiencing short bursts of employment in particular yards, the marginal position of the individual in the yard will render the inner group norms of horizontal obligations more or less inoperative and absenteeism and 'bad' time-keeping will be apparent. The tenuous involvement of the 'dosser' in the yard will also be reflected in the care of the horses which will be slapdash and, lacking the key resource of the 'good' lad, namely patience, the dosser is likely to be more whip happy on the canters and prone to knock the horse about in its box and so on. The model is precisely a stereotype and is not likely to be found in its totality, though elements of it are indeed distributed to some degree through

the occupation. The model, of course, is also prescriptive. Individuals may acknowledge lapses in their own behaviour in these terms - but they are regarded as lapses.

The lads, then, share with members of other occupational communities an occupationally structured self image, a distinctive social identity and a remarkable degree of unanamity on the qualities required of the good member. On the other hand, it is quite evident that the lads fall far short of being carried away on a tide of occupational egoism.

Occupational Reference Points

When looking at the self image of the lad it was evident that there was a considerable level of agreement over a core aspect of that image, i.e. over the qualities of a 'good' lad. This type of consensus is a typical feature of an occupational community, indeed for Salaman this sharing of values and views in common, represents one of the essential components of such a social configuration. At the same time it indicates that the members use the occupation as a primary reference point, as a source of values, as a justification for their own views and as a standard of self-evaluation and occupational competence. Hence, it is other members of the occupation who are 'significant' rather than outsiders or the community at large. This 'referencing' is an important part of the community of racing lads and indeed of any, occupational community. While I did not ask any direct questions on 'identification' as Salaman did for example, with the questions 'Do you think that compared with other people you are paid enough? Who are you comparing yourself with? Who do you mean by "you"'; it was quite clear that the lads referred to the occupation of racing lads as a whole and not to those in Newmarket only or at least they failed to single out Newmarket lads only. This is not to say that their colleagues in other parts of the

country were at the forefront of their thoughts - they were not; merely that they were not excluded in comparisons. In answers to my question "How do you think your wages compare with industrial workers' wages in the country as a whole?', it was clear that the racing lads' lot as a whole was being considered though this was fairly unproblematic as, being the highest paid lads, Newmarket could serve as a limiting case. This is not to say that respondents were not aware of the earnings difference between Newmarket and other racing centres - everybody 'knows' what the conditions are like "up North" for example, apart from going away racing:

> "We've been to M... playing football you know, I know what it's like up there, it's terrible, we get more wages here and it's in the middle of nowhere."

However, the comparison with workers outside the industry from the point of view of the lads as a whole are for the most part more meaningful than those based on internal differences.

As was evident in the discussion of the lads' perceptions of the special nature of their work, downward comparisons with unskilled factory workers are more consequential than with different types of worker in the industry or with workers in the industry elsewhere. The point is also illustrated by the small proportion of lads (29%) who said that if given the choice, they would choose a different occupation at the start of their working life. Most of these mentioned a skilled trade or a trade where skill was recognised, for example, after an apprenticeship.

However, neither is much play made about the undoubted differences between the Newmarket yards. These differences are again common knowledge though the differentials tend to be understated; more variation

was found in basic pay rates than seems to be appreciated by the lads themselves. However, some rationalisation takes place legitimating continued association with a yard in either other extrinsic terms - 'I do a good horse at the moment' or 'we get paid extra for a third lot', 'the owner is always dropping me' and so on, or intrinsic reasons 'we've a good bunch of lads', 'he's a very good guv'nor to work for', 'it's a very happy yard'. However, most of the lads (97%) thought their 'present yard about as good a place as there is to work in Newmarket':

> "There's not a lot in them, just about. There's nothing really - more or less all of the the's the same we don't have as much to carry away as some do ..."
>
> "You can't compare our yard with Cecil's of Cumani's - full of top class horses - the wages are the same basically - where you fall down is over pool money where they'll get £200-£500, but our lads get top wages in Newmarket. Wages-wise it's about as good."

Hence, while lads are certainly aware of some differences in earnings between yards in their own locale, the does not appear as predominant a preoccupation as with the railwaymen in Cambridge studied by Salaman, for example.

The self-perceived marginality of the occupation has already been discussed and it will be recalled that one of the most explicit expressions of this marginality was found in responses to the 'invisible men' question. As was seen, lads had absolutely no difficulty in identifying with this sentiment but the point is that this was viewed as a status slight on the occupation of the lads as a whole. No distinctions were made by or in terms of, Head Lads or Travelling Head Lads, work riders or workers in different locations of the industry.

It appears then that the occupational community of the stablemen is less

localised than that of many other working class occupations such as that of Salaman's railwaymen and that it approximates more to what he refers to as a 'cosmopolitan community'; that is, one based on the occupation as a whole rather than one based on 'people who interact with each other through working together'. Of course, in the case of the racing lads this 'cosmopolitanism' is in the first instance mediated through a specific locale owing to the concentrated nature of the industry in that place but the point to emphasise is that it does not appear to be narrowly limited to a specific locale. In fact the cosmopolitanism of the racing community is often explicitly remarked upon:

> "It's very hard to find anybody (i.e. among the lads) that's born and bred in Newmarket for a start, it's very cosmopolitan you get Welshmen, Irishmen, people from all over, all sorts come to work here ..."

Of course the meanings of 'cosmopolitan' here are not directly coextensive. Equally, it would also be a mistake here to ignore Weber's general injunction that concepts and explanations have to bear some relation to subjects meanings, to be adequate. In the end, of course, these conceptual labels are only useful insofar as they help to elucidate the nature of the phenomenon under scrutiny. In this case it is likely that the occupational community of the racing lads falls neatly into neither the 'cosmopolitan' nor 'local' boxes. As 'localisation' is a disposition which is a key support of traditional authority (Norris, 1978) and a characteristic of a deferential workforce, its problematic status in this context supports earlier observations on the tenuous reality of 'deference' in the occupation.

However, further support for the view that the lads probably display more aspects of cosmopolitanism, derives from the considerable degree of mobility experienced by racing lads, both in the sense that travelling horses

to races is an expected though not strictly required part of the job and in the sense that occupational histories exhibit patterns of quite extensive geographical mobility. Normally lads travel their own horses to race meetings which given the decentralised format of British racing, means that in the course of a season they clock up considerable mileages and a number of over-night stays, a feature of the work which contributes to its 'inclusive' character.[15] The conditions experienced on these journeys and stays are a constant source of both grievance and folklore, but the point is that the experiences are shared with lads from other racing centres. This is certainly not to say that these meetings are all camaraderie and socialising for which, contrary to common belief, there is precious little time. Some respondents also thought that a lot of the Northern lads were a bit 'cliquey', and Newmarket lads themselves may stick together when they are away racing.

> "They stick very close together racing lads, especially if they're away racing ... like the other day I went away with some of Ian Walker's lads, well I never have anything to do with them really except for one lad I used to play in a group with ... and yet when you're from Newmarket away racing you stick together sort of thing you know ..."

Equally, there is a certain amount of contact with lads from other areas, it can hardly be avoided; though, of course, it is a truism that such contact can be supportive as well as subversive of distinctions, reinforcing as well as reducing social distance. Nevertheless, there is certainly no evidence of what might amount to apartheid between lads from different centres. Hence the nature of certain aspects of the job and employment are conducive to affirming the status of the 'occupation' as the reference point rather than say the occupation in Newmarket or even more narrowly, the occupation in a particular workplace, although these clearly play an important role and local loyalties are indeed generated.

However, perhaps even more significant for this point is the fact that a good proportion of lads have experienced work in other racing centres. Of the 91% of respondents who had worked in at least one other racing stable, 74% had worked in at least one other centre, 51% in more than one other. A few had completed the Yorkshire, Lambourn, Epsom and Newmarket 'round', for example. Where this sort of occupational mobility is the norm rather than the exception, approximating more to middle class patterns than those exhibited by most working class occupations, the more likely it is that the reference points adopted by members will be wider than their immediate working locale. Again this is not to say that workers do not still have their attachments to one place rather than another as one lad suggested when asked if he would consider leaving Newmarket if, for some reason, he left his present job:

> "No I would move away from Newmarket - try and go back to Lambourn, there's an entirely different atmosphere to Newmarket - I find people very distant in Newmarket - the majority of lads don't seem to mix whereas in Lambourn it's a small community, everybody mixes and knows each other - I think you could work in Newmarket and pass the same people in racing for years and not know who the hell they are, people tend to be a lot more friendly in Lambourn."

and as he explained later:

> "I don't dislike Newmarket, I just like Lambourn."

To an extent these remarks reflect the view of someone relatively new (six months) to the town and would not be shared by the majority of 'insiders' but illustrates the obvious point that people may still have their preferences within wider reference points, in fact this is likely to be a consequence of wider horizons. Overall then, the occupational community extends beyond specific shared work situations and while the geographical locale provides the

boundaries of the most immediate reference points it does not limit them by any means. We are therefore justified in describing the occupational community of the racing lad as relatively cosmopolitan.

Occupational Value System

The kind of occupational identification discussed above is an important of the occupational culture, the collection of beliefs and folklore. The occupational culture provides the source of members' self-image, beliefs about what constitutes the 'good' practitioner of the craft, the respository of knowledge not only of the skills which are typically thought to be required of the worker but also about the occupation itself and about those with whom it relates most directly. In some occupations the occupational culture has served an important social support for the struggles which the members have experienced with their employing organisations or the society at large. British coal miners, though by no means an homogenous group, provide perhaps one of the classic examples of it. By the same token the occupational culture has performed a similar role for some occupations in their sectionalist struggles with other groups of workers often in the same industry and often in the face of economic and technological change: some recent studies of shipbuilding workers have particularly brought out this aspect (Brown and Brennan, 1970; 1975). Hence the occupational culture not only provides individuals with their personal maps but can also, under some circumstances, serve certain protective functions for the occupation as a whole.

Various aspects of the occupational culture are transferred implicitly to new generations during their technical training. Training, of course, can adopt various levels of formality with differing amounts of formal instruction and empirical job based learning. The latter has been and still is, the

predominant mode of training for racing lads, traditionally through the medium of the apprenticeship which, until recently, lasted normally five years. This type of 'on-the-job' training in the company of skilled practitioners of the craft offered perhaps one of the most efficient means whereby the non-technical aspects of the occupational culture could be transferred. As skill acquisition is almost wholly empirical, the changes in the formal framework of the apprenticeship is in itself no direct guide to the state of 'culture transfer'. Nevertheless, the declining emphasis placed on the apprenticeship as a mode of entry probably does represent a threat to some aspects of that culture and is perceived as such by many of the older workers who see the job as being diluted by unskilled labour. However, it may be instructive to look at further aspects of the occupational culture of the lads.

In the discussion of the self-image of the racing lads, it was seen that they distinguish themselves from other workers in terms of the special skills required for working with horses and especially with temperamental thoroughbreds, ineptly named as they are. This view is firmly implanted in the value system of the racing lad and an important status prop even if it goes largely unrecognised by others. Workers who share in an occupational culture may be expected to show a certain degree of conscensus over basic values though this is no reflection on their capacity for independent thought, 'independence' as will be noted when discussing attitudes to trade unionism, is itself a valued characteristic. Generally speaking, the closer a 'value' relates to the work the greater the conscensus is there likely to be about it. It has already been seen indeed that racing lads display quite strong agreement on certain work based values. On the other hand, there is certainly no equivalent of the view reported by Cannon, for example, of compositors and by Salaman of railway men, that the 'good' printer or railwayman was a

supporter of the Labour Party!

Hence, as noted previously, while riding represents the pre-eminent technical skill for the lads, a greater emphasis is placed on the value of the 'correct' orientation and approach to the work, and specifically to the horse, namely that conjured up by the terms, care, dedication and patience. Another widely shared view was that one of the interesting things about working with horses was that you were always learning something. Horses are a source of endless mystery; it does not matter how long you have been in the game you never quite get to the bottom of them'. This was a view which was expressed among old and young alike. It is the type of view which implies a premium based on experience and one which is totally comensurate with empirically based knowledge and skills.

> "... but even then I was very slow in learning - the first year and a half I was useless - I couldn't grasp it at all, the riding, but I stuck at it then all of a sudden, click ... it just came - but I still say you never learn everything - if you've been in the game a hundred years you never learn it all."

suggested a lad whose aim was to be a good horseman, having 'failed' to make it as a 'jock'. This kind of feeling is also reinforced by the high turnover of horses in flat yards. No sooner has a lad begun to fathom one animal than it leaves the yard and the lad is back to square one with a new yearling, getting to know its quirks and peculiarities, hence the lad is, literally, learning all the time however much equestrian knowledge is built up. As with the railwaymen studied by Salaman, racing lads value the skills and abilities which are deemed necessary for the job. A number of older head lads and especially one or two well-known retired head lads were frequently referred to in interviews with admiration as examples of lads who knew the job backwards. The feeling was that maybe they had not learned

everything but what they did not know about horses was scarcely worth knowing. The importance of such a worker to a yard was remarked upon by a number of lads:

> "Well I served my time with Dave Simpson* and the head lad there was Billy Russell* - he was one of the best head lads in Newmarket and when he left, well, Simpson's yard has gradually gone down hill. He was about 69 when he left - Simpson kept persuading him to stay on. The last year he was there Simpson had (over 70) winners, next year they had about (over 20), then he had only about (under 10)."
>
> (* pseudonyms)

A younger head lad himself remarked that "a lot of these old racing lads could buy and sell some of their trainers". One should not create the impression, however, that these qualities are seen to be found only among the experienced lads. Considerable respect is accorded to certain trainers and jockeys who also embody respective abilities. Noel Murless and Lester Piggott in particular evoked unbegrudged esteem:

> "I always thought that Noel Murless was an A1 trainer - he could take a string of yearlings out on the heath there when they were all broken in and he could sort out his back end 2 year olds that's going to be 3 year olds (i.e. before they run) - when you've got 70-80 in the string and he can sort out his good 3 year olds and his likely 2 year olds (i.e. precocious ones) that's going to be winners and separate them, leave the others alone for one year ... and then be able to say before they're 3 year olds 'that's in line for the 1,000 guineas or the Derby!' ... that's a great thing when a man can get a string of horses and know them inside out - just like that - and be right, he wasn't often wrong, that's a great thing in a trainer."

Lester's horsemanship as well as jockeyship is also legendary:

> "Lester rode my horse for me down here, when he came back he said he'll be a bit sore in his off-fore tomorrow, well the next day there it was!"

Nevertheless, the lads do have a high opinion of their own skills and value,

both on an individual and collective level. In terms of the former, a question was asked which was primarily designed to evoke perceptions of the local labour market which it did, although, as it turned out, in a slightly confusing way. The question said "If you did leave your present job how easy or difficult would it be do you think, for your employer to find someone else to do your job?' Obviously, the terms 'easy' and 'difficult' allow a good deal of latitude and the responses can only be taken as broadly indicative.

Table 33 Perceptions of the Ease of Labour Substitutability

	(n = 58) %
Easy for employer to find replacement for respondent	29.3
Difficult for employer to find replacement for respondent	24.2
Easy, but not someone as good	43.1
D.K.	3.4
	100.0

Minorities of respondents were prepared to decide straightforwardly on the issue but the greater part of the workers made an important qualification in the distinction between replacing them personally and finding another 'body'. The common view here was that while it might be possible to find a body (not at all a certainty) it might not be or was unlikely to be, as good! There were exceptions typified by this lad from a yard which I knew was at the time unsuccessfully advertising for lads despite offering a good 'Newmarket' wage:

> "Well it wouldn't be so easy - it would be easy for me to find another job in racing - but it wouldn't be so easy to replace me because of the general situation ... that's not saying 'me' to replace, - anybody."

More typical examples were, however:

> "He'd get plenty to fill the spot but they may not do the job the same."
>
> "Well someone of my ability? I think he'd have a hell of a job to get somebody, I'm not just boasting ... and reliability, you wouldn't get anyone hardly, you wouldn't it's a fact."
>
> "Well you'd always get someone to do it ... whether that somebody would stop or was as good as me is another thing."

These three examples were from three lads with considerable experience between them but the same view cuts across age differences, again displaying the strength of the occupational culture and socialisation; the following is the view of a nineteen year old lad who served a three year apprenticeship:

> "Pretty easy but it's a case of getting good staff, you can get lads anywhere but good lads are hard to come by."

and a final example from a lad fifteen years his senior, illustrating this occupational self-confidence and the value placed on possession of the relevant skills:

> "Well I class myself as a pretty good stable lad where I am you could get another body but not the same quality."

Needless to say, no-one admits to being anything else but a 'good lad'. At another level these views are reflected in perceptions of the collective contribution of lads to any racing stable. For example, I asked a revealing if tortuous question, also discussed in Chapter Six (Table 28), coming at the end of a series of inquiries about trainers and training, 'Well if we leave out the factor of say good horses what would you say was the most important other factor helping to make a successful stable?'. (There was an obvious

answer to that, picked up by one lad, i.e. winning with bad ones). It should be borne in mind that because of the order of questions, respondents at this stage would have a discussion about the relative qualities of trainers ringing in their ears. Despite this (though arguably, perhaps, because of it!) very few lads thought it had much to do with the trainer. The overwhelming majority of replies (as was indicated in Table 28) revolved around the necessity of having 'good lads' or 'good staff' or 'lads who know their jobs'. One iconoclast even put it like this:

> "Good lads ... I'd put good lads before good horses - good horses get screwed up by bad lads."

However, a head lad in a small yard who had spent his middle years out of racing echoed the common sentiment:

> "Well you've got to have the staff, that's the most important thing in any yard in England or wherever, you've got to have the staff to actually handle the animals, I mean you can put some kid on there or even what we call a board-wage man, if they get a paid wage, a full wage ... if he's bad-tempered he can ruin a horse in a week - like that ... staff is the most important thing ..."

and another said:

> "No matter how good a trainer is - he's only as good as the people he's got working for him - it's got to be a complete team effort from top to bottom, from the trainer right down to the bottom apprentice."

An emphasis on the importance of teamwork in fact formed a minor undercurrent in the responses to this question and is an expression of what is generally seen to be the interdependent nature of work in a racing yard, an issue discussed in the previous chapter. However, the stress on the importance of having competent, good lads is a much stronger one, again reflecting the value placed on their 'special' skills.

Apart from dedication and patience, reliability is also a valued characteristic; however, it would be a mistake to see this as an indication of an intense moral commitment to work or even to the employer. There are good 'down-to-earth' reasons for holding to this value which related to the interdependent nature of work in a stable which involves strong horizontal obligations for the individual. The horses 'have' to be done, they cannot be switched off, hence if someone does not 'turn in' there is more work to be shared out as a consequence, a situation which is a source of considerable irritance:

> "... in racing it's not like a factory where if you do someone else's work you get paid for it - if someone takes a day off and you do their work all it means is that you're finished twenty minutes later everyday - the work's got to be done and nobody gets paid for it, you get the odd place where you get the odd £1 or 50p for doing something extra."

Needless to say, despite this indignant attitude, absenteeism is perceived to be a fairly common fact of life, especially by the older lads and constitutes an aspect of generational friction. The older lads are prone to give examples of what they see as the pathetic excuses some lads give for not 'turning in'. However, this kind of complaint is liable to be exaggerated in contrast with past situations.[16] Salaman found a similar situation among his railwaymen. Nevertheless, it is subjectively felt to have increased. Many lads indeed were very candid about their waywardness in this respect, the rigours of a night out on the town and the consequent 'fat head' or of a journey from Scotland after racing, arriving back in the early hours are neither very conducive to an enthusiastic start at 6.00 a.m.! One lad who toyed with the analogies with the factory and so on, provides a classic statement on the issue:

> "It's got worse you know ... there again I've done it myself, when my mates came down from Scotland when I was working at ... I went up to the hospital and said I had a bad back and got a week off work and went to Yarmouth for a week. I would never have done it if they hadn't been there you know, that's not me I don't like doing it you know but I was getting a bit cheesed off with the yard anyway ... it happens, everybody's done it, especially this yard, I've been here four months and there's never been a full turn out yet, we'd 8 off for about a week, that's something I disagree with in this yard ... too many people off then you're struggling ... you know."

Hence, reliability is a valued trait though some find it more difficult to live up to than others.

Another value which elicited a large measure of agreement was that of loyalty to the yard and 'your' horses. To the outsider this appears to be rather hard to square with the high turnover rates in the yards. However, the view seems to be that while 'you are there it's your yard and you do not run it down publicly to outsiders'. The same principle applies to the horses; when a lad is allocated a horse it is 'his' or 'hers'; it may turn out to be a good one, even a classic horse, but even if it turns out to be an 'absolute scrubber', the lad should remain loyal to it until it leaves the stable. In discussing the statement 'Lads should always be loyal to their stable even if it means putting themselves out quite a bit', the majority of lads thought that most lads put themselves out as a matter of course, as one middle aged lad explained:

> "Well they already do that ... by doing more horses than they should do, coming in on your weekend off to go racing, something like that, getting knocked up at 6.00 in the morning 'You're going to Scotland' ... things like that, that's happened to me and I went."

The more general point was put if a little dramatically by a younger lad:

> "The bit about loyalty ... I think everyone in racing is loyal to the business and I don't know a lad who hasn't come in to see if his horse is alright at night-time or has done something out of his own

> time - if you went tonight - if you've got a horse who's got colic and you think it might die or something like that, you'd get overwhelming people to come in and have a look at him - all the time."

Loyalty to the stable is for the most part mediated through loyalty to the horses, in fact it is probably spurious to separate the two.

It will be evident from the discussion in Chapter Five that the nature of the work process in racing stables is highly conducive to the development of strong ties of attachment between the lad and the animal which have nothing to do, as it were, with an a priori sentimental disposition. This attachment is a significant factor in overall job involvement and while it is a taken for granted aspect of the occupational culture and not reflected upon at great length, it commonly develops to a remarkable extent. Examples of ties between lad and animal which extend beyond the normal affective boundaries, themselves become part of occupational folklore such as the case mentioned in several interviews of the lad who 'did' the Derby winner, Mill Reef, and followed his horse to the National Stud to look after his charge there. A less dramatic but moving example is provided by the following thirty-five year old respondent, which deserves to be mentioned if for nothing more than the historical record:

> "I looked after a good jumper called Magellan. Now I got him when I first went to H's and I looked after him. He came over from Ireland - big strong horse he was and I looked after him for a couple of years and I got on with him from the start. He was a five year old when he first came - and I got so attached to that old bugger, I used to ride him out, everything to do with him except school him when his jockey used to come like. He was such a tough bugger it could take a bit of riding; for a young horse he had all the guts in the world, he was as brave as anything. He won me a couple of nice races, chases, you know. I took him away racing. I'd seen him jump on the course and I thought he had so much guts he'd do himself, you know. So anyhow he did one day, at Newbury. He hadn't run for quite a long time, he was only having a run to bring him right for Cheltenham and he was in a good race and had run a blinder of a race to the second last and he came to the last still jumped the last as big as he

jumped the first but he landed bang on his head and I was up in the stands and I thought ... I seen him fall and I went down the stairs to catch him when he came up down by the gate. I waited for a couple of minutes and the bloke on the gate said he's probably winded. I waited for a couple more minutes and there was still no sign of him coming up. Well there was a crowd gathered down there so I thought I'd wander down to see what's going on. So when I got down there'd already been a vet got down there and he said 'is this your horse son' and I said yes - it's over here - and I thought aye the old horse is still flat on the floor. Anyhow by this time the other vet had come down for a second opinion - and when I saw the second come I thought well that's it you know, something's badly up here you know, the next race was only five minutes off, you know ... by God I tell you what, it was like losing ... it was a shock to me. So I said to one of the old boys that does the divots on the top of the fences and that and puts the divots in the floor, I said to him would you do me a favour and hold him while they shoot him and he said I will son. So I wandered away - so I didn't hear the shot - but I came back and that old boy you know was crying his eyes out, the old boy on the course - by God I was and all you know - and he says I tell you what son, that was one of our favourite horses, that old horse being put down - we've all got our favourites around here, and they all back their own and that was one of them. But I tell you what, I never got over that for bloody ages - no way.

The thing about him was that he was so bloody hard when he was out on that course and yet you could put a little kid in his box and we wouldn't hurt it. That's about horses, you get attached to them you know. Just about three months after - I'd got over it you know - then I got a certificate for the 'best turned out' (i.e. best turned horse in the paddock) over him and I thought here we go again and it brought back them memories you know. I got a fiver and a certificate - I've got in in there now - Magellan at Newbury - and I'd thought I'd finished with him, you know."

Insofar as this example concerns the relationship between a lad and jumping horse in a 'flat' yard where normally horses spend no more than two years, it is not strictly representative but most lads are able to recount a similar tale of an attachment struck up with a particular animal.

However, while attachment to the animal is capable of mediating a lad's whole perspective towards the job, loyalty is by no means unconditional as another middle aged, internationally travelled lad, illustrates:

"I mean there again, depends on various employers or trainers, we'll call them employers, I mean you could work for a trainer and he could say 'right the horses are finished at 12 o'clock but I pay you

> until 1 o'clock so you've got to stop' while another might say, 'well you've finished you might as well be away'. So if you find that a trainer is good to you you work accordingly, if you work for a bastard you either change your job or put up with it."

As the extent of 'voting with feet' in the industry indicates, there are limits to loyalty but it, nevertheless, seems to be an important aspect of occupational ideology, though its practice is often put to severe tests.

Another important aspect of the occupational culture which was discussed earlier in terms of the notion of 'marginality', are the strongly shared feelings of status deprivation. The lads see themselves as the backbone of industry from which a great many punters derive interest and enjoyment and from which the government derives considerable revenues (a universally shared view in the industry) but from which they receive little recognition in return, either materially or status-wise. The occupational culture then is productive of common feelings of situation but as will be evident in the next chapter, little solidarity.

The interstices of the network of occupational values are filled in by a constantly evolving anthology of rituals, dramas and more or less apochryphal anecdotes. To that perennial practice of manual, male work culture, nicknaming, the lads have contributed their own special twist. 'Chalky's', 'Sooty's' and 'Dusty's' are as ubiquitous as elsewhere but there is a tradition of re-christening lads by their town of origin. 'Yarmouth', 'Sheff' (Sheffield), 'Donnie', (Doncaster), 'Chester', 'Halifax' and so on, are among many frequently used nicknames. As with many other work cultures those incidents and anecdotes which evoke spontaneous mirth among the lads and which are temporarily preserved in the culture, are those which involve some subversion of the employer's authority and celebrate the independence of the lads from the employer. For example, one lad of the author's acquaintence

had been 'sacked' so many times by his present trainer that their relationship had become something of a legend. The reluctance of the employer to finally dismiss the lad was taken as a token of the value of a competent, if somewhat eccentric and wayward lad, to an employer. One of these sackings had reputedly followed the hilarious attempts of the lad to 'lead his horse up' at a race meeting while virtually paralytic with drink. Another favourite concerned the case of a lad who had managed to steer his horse on the gallop after the bit had broken and slipped through the horse's mouth rendering it virtually uncontrollable. Having accomplished this remarkable feat with quiet composure, the rider dismounted in full view of the trainer, dragged the tack of his mount, hurled the bridal and rein at it and stomped off home leaving the somewhat startled animal grazing on the heath! It is of this kind of insolent heroism (against which no action was taken) albeit inflated with the passage of time, that reputations are made and which provides a constant refurbishment of occupational folklore.

Work and Non-Work

One of the most noticeable features of occupational communities, indeed a defining characteristic, is the extent to which the worlds of work and non-work blur into each other. This is not to say that as a rule members of these communities do not have a clear idea of where work ends and leisure begins, although one will certainly find examples of this situation. More often one finds that these workers will protest to the opposite effect with phrases like, for example, 'when I leave that yard that's it 'til tommorrow'. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the non-work life of such workers seems to be very heavily conditioned by work experience and relationships and exhibits many parallels with it. In his study for example, Salaman found that a good majority of his subjects mentioned fellow members of the occupation as 'best friends'. Among the railwaymen these were most often

immediate work mates. The architects were prone to have non-work interests which closely paralleled their work, for example a preoccupation with what might be called 'aesthetic subjects'. There is no evidence that railwaymen were clandestine model-railway enthusiasts but they did tend to share a common interest in gardening! The latter appeared to be particularly suited to the patterns of shift working. However this and other popular interests are thought to have been convenient avenues in which the railwaymen could utilise abilities and skills which were normally denied them in the course of everyday work. The extent to which some of these hobbies were shared with other workers made it possible to talk of them as an occupational characteristic.

Hence, in looking at the convergence of work and non-work we may look at patterns of 'preferential association', i.e. the extent of socialising in the broadest sense, with occupational colleagues and the nature and patterns of leisure time activity and interests. In terms of the 'lads' it is clear that friends and people with whom leisure time is shared are primarily chosen from within the occupation. Again, however, the situation of the lads is strictly analogous to neither of the groups studied by Salaman. Salaman argues, for example, that one aspect of the cosmopolitan/local distinction is that 'locals' (the railwaymen) will tend to choose friends from among their work mates whereas the usually more geographically dispersed 'cosmopolitans' (the architects) will tend to exhibit 'occupation' - wide friendship patterns. A major factor accounting for this difference being the divergence in patterns of occupational training and subsequent mobility. Now while work mates are a source of friends out of work for racing lads (for example many claimed (41%) to have one or two close friends in the yard, although a sizeable minority (36%) said they did not have any 'what you would call close friends'), the community of stableworkers in the town appears to be as

significant a source of friends as the workplace. One of the reasons for this which represents a point at which the lads are more comparable to the architects, is the relatively high level of job mobility within the town; as well as, of course, the sheer preponderance of occupational peers who are not work mates. In other words, it is more likely that friends who are workmates will stay friends while ceasing very often to be workmates. Also the town is obviously the sort of place where lads will meet non-workmates in sociable settings.

In addition to the 'close friends' question the lads were also asked about their wider friendship networks. Fairly predictably most claimed to have a wide circle of friends and acquaintances - nobody likes to admit to having no friends. However, the majority of lads (53%) intimated that most of their 'friends' were in racing, a smallish minority (24%) put the figure at about 50/50 in racing, while a few usually younger lads reckoned that all their friends were in racing in some capacity or other. Hence the occupation, whether inside or outside a particular workplace, is the most significant generator of non-work friendships. There is a high incidence of preferential association linked to the occupation.

Equally one cannot ignore the situation that although Newmarket is a fairly heterogeneous town, the degree of choice in friendship networks is probably not great especially for non-locals (the vast majority of lads). This is especially so given what has previously been suggested concerning the perceived hostility of 'non-racing' locals towards the racing lads, something which is often brought home to the lads when they start (or try!) to date local girls (or the reverse situation for female lads). One further point which is worth making here is that although the yards are to a certain extent in competition with one another, this appears to make little

difference to sociability; rivalries are rarely taken much farther than a joking relationship. Paradoxically though, as will be evident in the discussion of trade unionism, the competitive aspect with its implications for rewards may be of indirect relevance to the question of solidarity if not to sociability.

The forty or so public houses and clubs in Newmarket provide the venue for much of the non-work socialisation. Over 80% of lads claimed that they went to one or more pubs or social clubs regularly where they would meet other lads and friends. One lad I spoke to claimed to visit five 'locals' every night.[17] While some yards were evidently somewhat 'cliquey', patronising a particular local, three or four pubs in the town served the function of common watering holes where you might expect to see a good proportion of the lads at one time or another, especially among the younger lads. An older regular of the 'Con' club expressed a possibly representative, if exaggerated view, of his contemporaries when suggesting:

> "but then I don't go down the town very much, I never go down on a weekend to have a drink because with a lot of young lads there's bound to be a bit of fighting ..."

However, the yard is on the whole not the basis of the patronage of the 'local', indeed a more noticeable tie of allegiance is indicated in the re-christening of a pub commonly known more or less affectionately depending on birthplace, as the 'Scottish Embassy!'. Also, of course, it was seen that when asked about friends in racing no-one wanted to restrict his circle to his immediate workplace and while there is no direct evidence on this, one certainly would not expect as many lads as railwaymen in Salaman's study, to restrict their friends to their particular workplace. On the other hand, friends would be 'friends in the town' rather than elsewhere at another

racing centre, but again what is known of mobility patterns would not exclude this.

A related, though minor, aspect of 'association' which tends to support the picture of patterns of sociability being advanced, concerns what might be called the social density of the occupational community. The lads are relatively thick on the ground even though the evidence tends to suggest that the stable population has dwindled over the past ten years. For example, lads were asked 'Excluding people from your own yard, how often would you expect to see someone you knew around Newmarket?'. There are obvious considerations of self-esteem which would tend to encourage people to respond to this cue in positive terms, but even bearing this in mind there is little doubt that the great majority of lads would expect to see or be seen by acquaintances. Virtually all the respondents (74%) replied to the effect that if they went down the town they would meet someone they knew outside their own yard, or to put it in the way that a number of lads did, including this single female lad:

> "Every second person - I wouldn't go into town if I didn't want to see anybody I knew."

And contrary to the view of the lad quoted earlier in his contrast with Lambourn, further representative examples might be:

> "Oh yeah, everyday, especially in Newmarket, I know quite a lot of lads in other yards, especially the older type of feller."
>
> "Well it would be hard to lead a normal life and avoid seeing people you knew in Newmarket."

and so on.

Similar kinds of statements are quoted by Salaman in respect of railway workers; again, however, taking into account patterns of occupational mobility, racing appears to approximate at least as strongly to the middle class architects. However, in explaining the associational preferences of the lads one cannot, in contrast with the architects, refer to the strength of 'the professional value system and world view' which derived from the profession as a whole and which the architects learned about and accepted as they experienced their professional training and socialisation. While such a value system, as we have seen, does exist to a certain extent, it appears more likely that these preferences derive from a combination of heavy involvement in work and marginality in the local community. Hence, again it appears that the stable lads fall somewhere between the cosmopolitan - local, dichotomy.

In order to avail a more direct comparison with Salaman's study on the issue of the convergence of work and non-work activities, the racing lads interviewed were also asked to say which of the following statements came closest to their view about how they saw their leisure time.

As one can see from the table, the racing lads display the same general pattern as the other two groups of workers; work emerges as a central life interest, work and leisure are not rigidly divorced, they have something to do with each other in a positive sort of way. Statements 1 and 3 were the most popular and only a few agreed with the second, which was sometimes regarded as a bit of a joke.

> "I'd say No. 4 ... that No. 2's a bit of a laugh isn't it ... I like that No. 2; how many lads have answered that one?"

Table 34 Attitudes to Work and Leisure, Racing Lads, Architects, Railwaymen

	Racing Lads (n = 58)	Architects (n = 52)	Railwaymen (n = 51)
'I am so involved in my work that it is hard to say where work ends and leisure begins'	34.5	38.46	-
'I put up with work largely because of the money and need my leisure time to recover from work'	6.9	-	3.92
'Leisure and family are more important to me than work. I try and forget all about it in my spare time'	13.8	1.92	15.69
'A man can only enjoy his leisure time if he gets something other than just money out of his work'	34.5	59.62	80.39

However, respondents seemed ambivalent about their replies or at least in their attitudes to the statements; a number felt uneasy about plumping for any of them unequivocally. A number claimed that although they were very involved in their work they knew where to draw the line. Naturally also many lads were reluctant to put work before family but did not want to downgrade work to the extent implied in the statement. Many respondents found that they could agree with some aspects of the statements but not others. Hence, while most finally made a choice it was often a forced one. Overall, then the statements evoked a variety of feelings which while illustrating the importance of work and its overlap with non-work were beset with ambiguity, ambiguity which was largely an artefact of the statements themselves. One lad, for example, replied:

"Probably No. 3 I think, it's the closest. I try to forget about

> work when I'm not there ... but I'm involved in it when I am there, ... a bit of both really. I think the person who does get involved with anything full time in your life ... I think you're cracking up or something ... that's why I like to do a lot of hobbies, like matchstick building ... I just like to have a lot of interests."

another stated:

> "I wouldn't say I was so involved in it, when I've finished I've finished ... well I would agree with that question, 'A man can only enjoy his leisure ... (etc.) ... to be honest with you I could do with £200 a week but I enjoy my work and I enjoy my leisure, but I could do with more money out of the job."

another put it this way:

> "Well I get pleasure out of my work but I like a bit of leisure. I look forward to my weekend off ... sometimes in the summer I miss it because we go away racing, then the wife gets on to me ... I don't work because of the money ... well I suppose I do ... but I don't need leisure to recover from work ... especially come April when you're out on the heath ... great."

In the end this respondent opted for statement No. 4, but as one can see, the route there is a rather tortuous one and it is still arguable whether that was an adequate summary of his view.

Also it appeared that although many lads wanted to forget about work when they were done, they also found it very difficult to do so in practice. Earlier in the interview the question was put, 'Can I ask you about when you're away from work - at weekends say - do you find yourself thinking about your horses occasionally or are you able to forget about them until Monday?'. Though pretty evenly divided, the majority of lads (52%) liked to think that they could cut off and most did not worry about their own job out of work, but it proved almost impossible to forget about horses altogether. The dilemma is explained by a lad with many years experience and as committed as ever to the job:

> "About every third weekend off I go away for a bit of a change and my job doesn't cross my mind - I only get a Saturday afternoon and a Sunday then I'm back on Monday morning - I completely cut off though a lot of friends of mine, they'll want to talk about racing and you've got to be polite!"

and a younger lad remarked ruefully:

> "Well you're never able to forget about them in Newmarket, that's where it does start to get on top of you at times. I like the work but I like to forget about it. I don't like my weekends off much, I'd rather work all the time - I sound like a creep but it bores me Sundays, I hate Sundays, all you can do is go down to the pub and drink and converse about horses ... this horse did this and that, there's no different subject unless you go out of Newmarket and then when I go home on holiday it's the same ... 'do you know any good tips' ..."

another lad said:

> "I forget them - if you get down the pub at night and somebody starts talking about their horses you know, someone will turn round and say 'oh shut up man, we see enough of them at work' but it comes pretty easy. Say if I went up to Scotland on holiday right, I wouldn't 'phone down and ask how my horses were, I wouldn't worry about them ... you get close to your animals you know but not that close."

As we have seen above this kind of view is not necessarily restricted to the less committed of stablemen. However, it is not a unanimous view, a sizeable proportion of lads (34.5%) claimed that the horses were always there in the back of your mind, though the distance between their replies and those above is not very great.

> "Something's always ticking over all the time - it's something you can't get away from in racing, you're surrounded by it - you go for a drink, you're surrounded by it."

Lads who confess to not being able to forget them are generally not displaying a sentimental attitude towards the animals, there are after all,

good instrumental reasons for worrying about your horses, though 'worry' is perhaps too strong a word. A number of lads remarked in the same vein as this female lad:

> "You still think about them, whether someone is knocking them about or mucking them in there, it's the same if you go out at night in this town, it's all horses, if you can't talk horses ..."

Mucking out your horses on Monday morning after they've been mucked in over the weekend, irritatingly means more work at a time when you are not like to be at your liveliest and as we have already seen, a moment's impatience on the heath can ruin a couple of months work. However, it is evident then that despite protestations to the contrary, thinking and talking about work and racing is second nature to the lads, something done almost involuntarily. 'Shop talk' then <u>is</u> a pervasive feature of the occupational culture.

There is little evidence of participation in job based associational life, except insofar as one can talk of the 'membership' of certain pubs and clubs in such terms and there is little participation in collective organisations such as the T. & GWU or the Stable Lads' Association which perform representative functions in national negotiation machinery.[19] It would also be difficult to argue that there is heavy involvement in work based hobbies and recreations. The most frequent reply to the question 'What sort of thing do you mostly like to do in your <u>free time</u> (a concept which evoked a number of derisory comments) outside of working hours?' was 'drink'. Of course there would be a certain amount of bravado in this kind of response but it would certainly be no exaggeration to say that the collective spare time interest of the occupation in Newmarket is what we might call 'drink based sociability'; socialising in pubs and heavy participation in popular pub games,

especially darts and 'pool'. This is the accepted way of soaking out the tensions of working with thoroughbred racehorses and collectivising the frustrations of working in a marginal, contradictory and self-interested 'industry'. Many lads will say that there is not much else to do though this is not strictly true, although it is much more likely to be the case in the more isolated racing areas such as Lambourn and Yorkshire. However, the pub, especially two or three in particular, is 'where the action is', that is, where you go to find out what is going on! Obviously family commitments tend to inhibit the participation of many lads at a particular stage in the life cycle in this style of sociability and older lads seem more likely to be regulars of two or three working men's clubs but, nevertheless, this kind of activity is a predominant feature of leisure time in the occupation. Relaxing is the thing, riding work is energetic enough! Needless to say there is a range of hobbies engaged in by some individuals whom one might term 'loners', having little to do with other lads outside of work.

Betting

Another 'relatively' shared leisure time activity is betting. Again the lads tend to adopt a rather schizoid attitude towards betting. Everybody has a bet now and again, a good many more 'now' than 'again'. Very few lads, however, see betting as a paying activity, they are perfectly aware that the 'bookie comes out on top' in the end. For example, in answer to my question, over 95% of the lads thought it was unrealistic to believe that lads could make up their earnings through betting with inside information; most regarded that view as another joke. One lad pointedly showed me his wage slip and asked who could have a bet with that kind of wage and a family to keep; and another:

> "No that's rubbish, rubbish, you've only got to look at them walking around the town - come out of betting offices on an afternoon -

> driving around on a pair of Dunlop wellies! I confine my betting to them (horses in the yard) I can lose enough just backing these."

A little less colourfully another lad more typically argued:

> "Not really, I mean - well I have a bet nearly every racing lad has a bet but at the end of the year I'm probably lucky if I've broke even, because everything you fancy in the yard well they can't all win otherwise it would be better than winning the pools -everything we fancy going out of the yard might come in one out of ten sort of thing. You've got to have the odd fiver on them. You don't make a fortune, no you're lucky if you break even."

As conventionally, the lads use an economic yardstick in evaluating the rationality of betting, but despite its perceived irrationality in these terms, they continue to bet on a sustained basis. Impressionistic observations, however, seemed to indicate that lads were no more likely to be what have come to be known as 'action gamblers' than other betting shop regulars. While the aeteology of gambling behaviour is not of direct interest here, this case does show the importance of situational factors as suggested in Chapter Three, because betting is an entrenched element in the occupational culture of the lads. Indeed there can be few occupations where 'professional' knowledge and judgement have such a ready recreational outlet as in the case of the racing lads. However, my own observations were enough to suggest that a lad's considered view on betting was no guide as to whether he or she betted regularly or not - most of the sceptics did in fact bet. It would also be a mistake to conclude that betting is always a losing game for the lad. A couple of lads claimed that they could make it pay by having only a few good punts a year with £50's and £60's rather than 'pissing about everyday with a few quid here and there' as one lad put it, and then only on horses which they were sure 'were off'.[22] In the case of one lad in particular, the opulance of his home comforts bore some evidence of his claim. Another lad getting a few rides over jumps summed up the general

view:

> "There are a few very shrewd people about who are making a few quid but there again not an astronomical amount ... there's so many ifs and buts", he went on, "the amount of occasions you know a horse is going to win are few and far between, in all honesty and I race ride for a bloody living practically, the amount of times I can tell you a horse is going to win ... I should think about four times a season, and that's through being in a small stable and the horse starts to speak to you, you know, he's run quite well the week before, finished fifth or sixth at Newmarket or some grade one track and you're dropping him in somewhere and he's talking to you when you're riding him out, squealing and kicking and things he's never done before, you know, and really blooming in his coat and really working nicely and that but them occasions come once in a blue moon really ..."

In the Newmarket betting shops it appears that there are at least a dozen 'blue moon's' a day. Indeed many of the lads commented on the relatively large number of bookmakers in the town which indicated that they were hardly being run out of business through the preponderance of 'inside information'. This lad went on to argue that the betting was an 'ego thing' but whatever the undoubted personal and social needs betting satisfies, it is an important if ambiguous part of non-work and the occupational culture.

Betting behaviour and drink-based sociability then derive from the occupational community in the same way that 'gardening' for example, the most popular but scarcely job-related hobby among the railwaymen, derives from their occupational community, that is, it derives from involvement with occupational group.

Conclusion

Overall, then, it can be seen that the racing lads share many of the characteristics of members of other occupational communities in terms of their self image, group reference points, occupational sociability and non-work life. Equally evident are the constellation of factors, involvement,

marginality and inclusivity, said to underly such a configuration. These are features likely to be shared to a greater or lesser degree by stableworkers in other racing centres though the workers themselves are prone to point to the differences between this or that centre. However, it is not suggested that Newmarket represents the most typical or ideal example. The more geographically isolated Lambourn and small Yorkshire training towns dominated to a greater extent by racing than is Newmarket, probably display more aspects of 'localism'; whereas Epsom is more likely to veer towards 'cosmopolitanism' along with Newmarket.

In fact, other more isolated racing establishments are more likely to resemble what Newby 1977) terms a 'farm-centred community', that is where the occupational community is centred on the farm or conceivably in this case the racing stable. Here, employer/employee relations are likely to be more pervasive and characterised by interactional status and extensive indulgency patterns, fostering upward identification. The relative isolation of the occupational community leads to ties of dependence on the farmer. Where workers live in accommodation closely tied to the place of work as in many racing yards, such a pattern is especially likely.

It may also be that the occupational community of stablemen is crossed by elements of what Newby also calls an 'encapsulated community', a possibility indicated by perceptions of marginality among the worforce, vis-a-vis the local population. In the farmworkers study Newby argues that in many villages a new line of polarisation has emerged between the locals and the newcomers - mainly middle class commuters and town dwellers, which provokes an encapsulation of the occupational community within the village 'community'. One of the important effects of this is that farmworkers and farmers find a common grievance and cause for identity; an

example of the situation described by Davis (1979) in the methodological note quoted at the beginning of the chapter.[23] However, while there may be some elements of encapsulation in the Newmarket example, there is little evidence that this of itself impels the racing workforce towards identity with employers. Indeed the evidence discussed in the previous chapter indicated that a degree of social distance from employers is maintained and, as a whole, the employers are regarded somewhat sceptically. The occupational community is important in maintaining this social distance and occupational self-confidence, but as the following chapter will indicate, it is insufficient, as in the case of the farmworkers, to sustain a solidaristic opposition. Grievances have periodically been transformed into real conflict but collective organisation and solidarity have been of a fragile nature.

The world of of the racing lad is one important dimension of the total world of racing. Though in some respects it is a very narrow one, it exhibits a complexity and a vibrance which enable it to make its own distinctive contribution to racing culture. Close examination reveals that a number of qualifications need to be made to the common stereotypical view of the occupational culture of the racing lad as conveyed by and constructed from, the work of novelists such as Walter Greenwood and Dick Francis, the prose of racing journalists and the images transmitted by the visual media. Racing lads are human beings, they exprience frustrations, fears, have needs for recognition, they have families and family obligations like other workers. All these temper the relationship with their work in one way or another.

Nevertheless, the most visible elements of occupational culture do distinguish racing lads from other manual occupations. There is indeed a strong element of community but one which, unusually, also evidences a

degree of cosmopolitanism; patterns of sociability are insular and somewhat raffish; loyalty to the animals is maintained in the face of evident exploitation; a certain value is placed on adventurism, nerve and skill. These and many other characteristics serve to maintain the image of the occupation as one of the few remaining 'heroic' work roles despite the changes which have taken place in the organisation of work. It is these features which have provided a good deal of the stuff of the simultaneously romantic and dubious image of racing which intrigues the wider betting public and, from time to time, more distant outsiders.

Notes and References

1. These divergent trends are reflected in the papers given at an important conference on 'The occupational community of the traditional worker' at Durham in 1972, subsequently published under the editorship of Bulmer (1975).

2. That is in the context of a broad overview of the area of job satisfaction.

3. The former case in particular showed the importance of computing ideology, in this instance religious ideology, in any formulation concerning social consciousness.

4. Salaman argues that there are three major determinants of occupational communities, involvement in work, marginality and inclusiveness. However, while involvement is considered the most important, it is not alone sufficient and must be accompanied by either or both marginality and occupational inclusiveness! Involvement can also apparently derive from the nature of certain types of work which of themselves generate involvement or it may be derive from prior orientation generated by the community, possibly through anticipatory socialisation for example. There is thus a certain amount of confusion about exactly what is a determinant.

5. See Chapter Six, discussion following Table 24..

6. A full ethnography of racing in the United States is provided by M. Scott (1968).

7. A paid lad who had competed his time was generally known as a 'board wageman' or a 'boardy'.

8. Recent research has also highlighted the fact that many people change jobs for no other reason than they 'fancy a change', though it is not a finding which accords particularly well with the assumptions implicit in many theories of the labour market, c.f. Curran (1978).

9. An identity pass issued to stable employees by the Jockey Club through trainers. No-one may be employed or enter a racecourse stable without one.

10. The quotation appeared in Ivor Herbert's column in the Sunday Express and the question ran as follows: "A stable lad was quoted in the Sunday Express recently as saying that the lads were racing's invisible men. Would you say this was generally true/untrue?".

11. Of the respondents who emphasised the 'riding' all were under the age of 25.

12. On this issue of the 'good stableman' the racing lads interesteringly exhibit a very similar pattern to the highly skilled steel smelters studied by Davis (1979). Like the racing lads they refer to personal qualities such as 'patience' in the context of work applications compared with the craftsman in the study for example who referred to general non-work specific attributes such as 'common-sense'. While the

stableman's occupation lacks the seniority system of the melters which produces a "thorough process of accommodation to the role of first hand" and "ensures a continuity of occupational tradition", the traditional apprenticeship values. (Davis, 1979, pp. 123-4).

13. This commonplace phrase is one of the gems of racing argot widely understood by participants but rarely articulated. The most explicit yet succinct definition which I have come across is provided by J. Hislop, "It consists in a light, level, sympathetic, elastic pressure inspired by the brain and conveyed through the arms, wrists, fingers, reins and bit to the horse's mouth, and thence to the horse's brain." (Hislop, 1971, p. 8).

14. A reference to presents from owners or 'dropsies' as they are sometimes called.

15. Occupational 'inclusiveness' for Salaman represents one of the three determinants of occupational communities and refers to the extent to which "those features of a man's occupational role which are likely to affect his non-work activities and interests and which, in particular, either restrict his ability to establish relationships with people outside his occupation or lead him to associate with, and make friends of, other members of his occupation". (Salaman, 1974, pp. 33). In Salaman's terms this 'inclusivity' in the case of the racing lads' results from 'restrictive factors' for example, hours of work, 'travelling horses' and so on.

16. As suggested in the previous chapter it is very difficult to control for the 'Rebecca Myth'.

17. Verifying that claim proved to be one of the more pleasurable research tasks.

18. The Conservative Club known as the 'con'. The club with its well-kept snooker table provided a congenial and less boisterous venue for many of the older lads especially.

19. Discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

20. This was a contention advanced by Eaton (1976) for example in the context of a discussion of the causes of the 1975 stable lads' strike. The argument is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

21. Habitual, if not compulsive, gamblers who are seen to be stimulated in their betting behaviour by the ambience, atmosphere and incentives of the gambling place, for example, the betting shop, where they are said to spend 'inordinate periods of time'. See the Churches Council on Gambling's submission to the 1978 Royal Commission on Gambling. The observations and theory on which this claim is based are, however, extremely dubious.

22. A term used to denote a situation where a horse is not only capable of winning but as importantly, trying to win.

23. That is where attention may be more usefully focused on relations between groups in the community.

CHAPTER EIGHT

COLLECTIVISM AND RACING: SHOP FLOOR POLITICS AND PROTEST

Introduction

This chapter will focus on the issue of collective organisation in employment relationships at the heart of the training industry. In so doing, it will touch upon a nerve which reverberates throughout racing culture, namely its historically intense, if rather contradictory, suspicion of collectivism and of the interference of what are perceived to be 'outside' elements in racing. Discussion of the ideology and action of the racing lads on this issue, in fact also resonates with the wider pattern of values and preferred forms of social organisation in racing as a whole. However, events in the more recent past in this area have served to de-stabilize these traditional arrangements and have exposed the racing world to the more critical gaze of wider social institutions. In particular, the 1975 stable lads' strike at Newmarket gained national notoriety and provoked the intervention of the statutory Horserace Betting Levy Board into this area to establish a pattern of regulation in employment which was as foreign to the industry as it was unwelcome to those in authority in many quarters. In concentrating on the issue of collectivism and protest then, the discussion is led back towards the societal level and in particular to the relationship between racing and the state, the subject of the next chapter. For the moment, however, the concern will be with the very specific area of organisation and collective action among the racing lads in the employment relationship.

The previous chapter demonstrated that the pattern of social relationships and work-based culture of the racing workforce in Newmarket

constituted an occupational community, a configuration to some degree likely to be found in the other main training centres. It was also noted, however, that there was a good deal of disagreement on the definition and conceptual status of the notion in the literature. The review conducted by Allcorn and Marsh (1975) for example, also showed the wide range of variation in conditions and features of reported occupational communities. Indeed, the term often seemed to conceal important differences between and within occupations. It is most apposite here, however, to refer to the problem raised in another context in Chapter Two, namely the distinction between sociability and solidarity. There was a tendency in some discussions to assume a simple relationship between communal sociability and collective solidarity and often, indeed, an identity with the wider working class. Allcorn and Marsh observe that the two terms were often used interchangeably, a practice which entailed both a considerable conceptual leap and a blinkered view of the empirical evidence.

In principle, it is possible to conceive of inverse and independent variation between sociability and solidarity. There are numerous cases of solidarity without sociability, indeed the history of the labour movement would be impossible if this were not the case. It has also become increasingly recognised that the parochialism often associated with communal sociability may be generally antithetical to wider class allegiances. Solidarity then cannot depend on interpersonal or even occupational sociability though they may, conceivably, be associated in practice. The careful studies of shipbuilding workers carried out by the Durham group which began to dismantle the stereotype of the traditional working class, also showed how the superficial homogeneity of the occupational culture of these workers was, in fact, marbled with sectionalism between occupational specialism, trades and skills, and between locales and yards (Brown and

Brennan, 1970; Brown et al, 1972; Cousins and Brown, 1975). In conventional terms much evidence could be found for the existence of an occupational community and communal sociability, but real evidence of occupational solidarity let alone class solidarity, was thin - in this, the assumed bastion of the working class. Between the appearance of sociability then, expressed in the features of an occupational community, and the reality of even occupational solidarity, there may exist an organisational and ideological chasm.

As will be evident in the following account, it is a gulf which also characterises the stance of the racing lad's occupation. This is not to say that there have not been instances of solidaristic action, or that solidaristic sentiments are totally absent in the social consciousness of the racing lad: nor does it mean that individuals are incapable of discerning common interests among their number which are opposed to those of employers, owners, bookmakers, the state, or whatever. What there is, however, is a lack of trust in the effectiveness of collective organisation which in turn seems to reflect a lack of confidence in the occupation, in fellow workmates, to achieve sufficient solidarity to make action stick.

This view is reinforced by past experiences of both direct and indirect attempts at collective action, the most recent of which has passed into occupational folklore in various versions. It is also reinforced by the market situation, discussed in Chapter Five, which, within limits, means that individual strategies of either self-improvement or of expressing discontent, are patently of more direct relevance than collective strategies in the form of trade union organisation which, broadly speaking, have failed.

Added to this is the competitive ethos and the 'sporting' analogy which

characterises the racing industry and which inevitably nurtures rivalry and self interest within the respectable guise of competitive, sporting endeavour. Against this background and in the absence of 'anticipatory socialisation' (Allcorn and Marsh, 1975), which makes naive new generations more susceptible to these metaphors, it would be surprising if there were not a current of individualism running through the occupation. What should be clear from the following discussion, however, is that the weakness or even lack of occupational solidarity has less to do with 'deference' than might at first be supposed.

Collectivism: Workers' Perspectives

In exploring the theme of solidarity and the significance of collectivist symbolism, the reported attitudes of the sample towards trade unionism and other aspects of racing politics will be examined. It will be evident that workers' views on this subject are influenced in one way or another, by how, in retrospect, they see a remarkable event in the history of the occupation, the 1975 stable lads' strike at Newmarket. Many of the views expressed reflect received wisdom on the strike, a 'wisdom' which in many respects refracts the media (racing and otherwise) representation of the dispute. In particular, the emphasis on the sensational and on what many media studies have shown to be a typical concern with effects as opposed to causes and a tendency towards the marginalisation of the workers and strike leaders concerned, was evident (Philo and Beharrel, 1977; Morley, 1976). However, many of the respondents were themselves strikers and took their own lessons from the dispute though some of these were also mediated by the received opinion when reported four years later.[1] A return to the strike itself will be made after the initial discussion of perspectives towards collective organisation which were tapped through an explicit series of questions in the interview schedule.[2]

Although the responses were divided into those of members of the Stable Lads Association (S.L.A.) or the Transport and General Workers Union (T.& G.W.U.) and those of non-members, it became apparent that this was by no means a hard and fast or even meaningful distinction; members and non-members were evidently not different social types. Some non-members were far more militantly minded than members and some members were much more reluctant to countenance industrial action than many non-members, for example.

In fact where non-members did express such views, opinions were volunteered as there was no formal question put to non-members on industrial action.[3] Although some non-members had in fact strong ideological objections to trades unions so also did some members! Overall the typical stance towards collective action can be characterised as 'non-union' or 'a-union' rather than 'anti-union', though there are naturally some strong anti-trade union people as there are 'pro'. At the time of the interviews at least, (as will be seen there are grounds for avoiding definitive statements) a prevalent view seemed to be that unionism was largely irrelevant or ineffective vis-a-vis the racing industry. On the whole, as has been shown elsewhere with other workers (Goldthorpe et al, 1969) the stance towards unionism of this group is not 'ideological' in the conventional sense but rather more instrumental. This position was, however, and somewhat paradoxically, coupled with general confusion and lack of knowledge of the role of the National Joint Council for Stable Staff (N.J.C.S.S.) and its constituents on the labour side, the S.L.A. and T. & G.W.U.[4] In any event it was clear that perspectives are much less obviously differentiated than the simple member/non-member breakdown might suggest.

The Members

However, a summary of the data will proceed at first along with member/non-member distinction. (It should be noted that because of the small numbers involved, no attempt is made to differentiate the responses of the female lads in the sample). In terms of an industry with recognised collective representation at national level, the reported level of membership in the sample was low. Only 12 of the 58 respondents in the sample were members and only one of those belonged to a recognised trade union; the remainder belonging to the Stable Lads Association which at the time was not a registered trade union. While my informal contacts indicated that this understated the membership of the T. & G.W.U. at least, nevertheless, it is certain that membership of this union was at the time at a particularly low ebb, possibly at the bottom of trough before a new recruitment initiative was begun in 1980, after the period of the fieldwork.[5] The decline in union organisation in Newmarket, which in terms of 1975 levels represents a decimation, is undoubtedly related to the immediate effects of the strike in that year.

In the aftermath of the dispute, activists and strike leaders, many of whom with considerable experience in the industry, were quite simply made redundant and often blacklisted. The 'no victimisation clause' in the agreement was ignored by the majority of employers. Many of these lads became involved in lengthy and largely abortive unfair dismissal proceedings and eventually left the industry.[6] By the time some of them had returned there was little left to join. Although the eventual agreement conceded virtually all of the union claim, in the immediate post-strike situation the employers were in the ascendancy.

In addition, the personal costs of the strike, both affective and financial,

led many workers to return to work and allow their membership in the absence of organisation to lapse, a step which others anticipated in the period between the overwhelming decision to strike and the first day of the strike. The one member of the union had in fact followed this course. Now a union representative, he had been a striker, had subsequently been made redundant, fought unsuccessfully on cases for unfair dismissal, but on the basis of previous reputation had eventually acquired another job in racing. As an activist he had articulate and clear views on unionism and its role in racing though it would be unrepresentative to concentrate on them here.

Joining the Organisation

The S.L.A., alternatively, was borne of the events surrounding the strike as an elite sponsored, employer supported 'staff association'. Only one respondent spontaneously joined the Association as a result of a public meeting, although this in fact was in Lambourn where he was then working. Ironically, he had also been the union branch secretary for a short time until dismayed by employer resistance and in the face of this, a lack of purpose and solidarity among the lads. This theme ran through his discussion and that of many non-members alike. For example, commenting on whether the issue was at all a live one in the yard the respondent replied:

> "No, as long as somebody is doing it for them, this is the whole attitude in racing - as long as the 10p a week is going in and they don't have to take it out of their wage packet ... somebody does it for them, you could go and ask them whether they were members and some of them that are wouldn't know if they were or not. I don't think you'll ever get 100% in racing and this is what is needed. It's the same as the union when it sprang up in Lambourn, when the T&G tried to run it in Lambourn ... all the yards were invited along to the meeting. X's lads went back, the following morning he said, any of you join the union and I'll sack you ... the boss doesn't want us to join so we're not joining ... this is what you are up against."

Nevertheless, the S.L.A. was in his view the best thing ever to have

happened to the lads and further that there was not the 'rift' that there was with the union which (echoing an important element of the received wisdom) "did not understand racing like it did industry". This was, he argued, because unlike the union, the SLA was an organisation run for racing people by racing people and one which therefore did not generate the same amount of antagonism in employers.

Table 35 Reasons for Joining Union/Association

	No. of Respondents
Good thing to join union in own industry (a racing union)	5
Recruited by employer/employers's secretary	4
Other lads in yard had joined	2
Instrumental/pragmatic reason	1
	12

In Newmarket the S.L.A. recruitment effort, which amounted to a simple public meeting, fell on stoney and sceptical ground. Hence all the Newmarket members had been recruited by stable secretaries on behalf of the employer. For some this had been the main 'reason' for joining; they had been asked and had not objected. A couple had joined because other lads in the yard had done so (including the one female 'member'), though most had thought it a good thing to join a 'union' based in their own industry. The following example of a middle aged lad with personal respect for his own employer, qua employer and trainer, is illustrative:

> "Well before I was a member of - like a lot of lads in the town, I was a member of the T. & G.W.U. - we know how far that got, what happened to the job then - the whole thing went hay-wire - then this was formed (S.L.A.) and I thought it's in our own industry anyhow, I thought if I could be a member of the T. & G.W.U. certainly I could be a member of my own union within the racing industry."

Another explained for a number of colleagues:

> "Well the secretary asked me, she said they were starting an association to try and get better wages for the lads, I thought most of the lads will probably join so I did you know."

Participation and Industrial Action

In view of this pattern of recruitment it is not surprising that in common with the majority of trade unionists by any measure, these workers are passive members. None had ever been to any association meeting (or had attempted to instigate one) and none had ever had any contact with an official of the association (though two had been branch officials when previously members of the T. & G.).

Equally, it should be said that the SLA had been extremely reticent vis-a-vis its Newmarket members, a situation which had engendered some scepticism and criticism; asked whether he attended association meetings another respondent replying in the negative added:

> "There's no membership card, no meetings, nothing, the lads get asked about nothing, in the T&G we used to have meetings, everything."

Overall, the members were in favour of the idea of their own union but the reality was membership by proxy.

The 'members' were also asked whether they would consider going on strike if their association or union called one. Although just under half said that they would, with the other half almost equally divided between those who would not and those who did not know, there was considerable uncertainty of the issue, much of it generated by the experience of 1975, shared by all but four of the 'members'.[7] As this item provoked spontaneous

reflections on the strike it is instructive to dwell on these for a moment. For example, these two lads, the first in his mid-thirties, the second in his mid-twenties, had the following to say on the event, comments which are reflected, as we shall see, among the non-members:

> "Well I would if our own body called one as it's our union that's calling us. We knew before that the T&G was never our union. You understand a bloke getting up at a meeting down there, I was at the meeting myself, and he's asking for a show of hands, 200 lads, 60-70 put their hands up for a five day week, it was getting out of proportion altogether you know and it did at the finish. It was a big farce in this town as far as the racing went (i.e. the strike) - there was a lot of friends lost - a lot of good people you know. No I think the strike did more damage than good and it's still there, they haven't sort of recovered yet - racing generally - quite a lot of owners took horses away from town - it was a damaging thing to happen."

The second lad with a rather more instrumental attachment to his employer and to the job, nevertheless, explained his feelings in the following way:

> "I don't know because I don't know enough about the association you know - I was on strike last time, there was a meeting on the Friday and we said if nothing happens by the Friday we'll walk out you know - so that's what happened, we went out - but if they called a meeting tonight and they said if we don't get an answer by next week we'll be out, I'd just hand in a minute's notice - I wouldn't blackleg the lads - do them in - I'd just get out of the game straight away, I wouldn't get involved. People say would you do it again, yes I'd strike again but there was a lot of money lost in that strike, well I was striking for nothing you know, the strike wasn't organised. I worked for Noel Murless, I was getting about £25 a week, they were asking for £24, I was getting more than they were asking for but we came out on strike in sympathy, and the lads we were coming out for weren't on strike themselves ... so it was just all wrong. I think the strike helped racing and ruined it as well, after the strike a lot of lads got laid off, the trainers didn't want to know, they thought they were trouble but they don't bother about it now you know. All the good lads are gone, the good riders, good horsemen - after the strike they got the sack, made redundant that's what it was called then, they got jobs up at the caravan factory and that and they haven't been back since, but there again it helped the lads in racing, they got more money, better conditions and that you know."

Obviously different analyses are implied by these two accounts, one questions

the appropriateness of this kind of action in the industry and the other more pragmatically questions both the degree of organisation, the resolve and intensity of solidarity of which there was only an intermittent display among the majority at the time.

In some ways these accounts epitomise the reactions of a somewhat native workforce in the face of unexpectedly strong opposition from employers. Patently, the action had its limitations and since in the last analysis, membership of a union implies a preparedness to take action of the last resort there is little wonder that the effectiveness and overall appropriateness of a collective, union strategy is called into doubt. Of those unwilling to countenance striking two preferred action which would not affect the horses. Others could not see any form of action being effective without sufficient solidarity and organisation. An ex-T&G man who had struck for five weeks now considered that striking was 'not the way out in this job' but nor could he see any other type of action being particularly effective.

> "I don't really think there is at this time. To do any damage you've got to get everybody out which is very, very hard, it's not just got to happen in one place it's got to happen all over the stables - not just in one yard to do any good. I think it would be very, very difficult."

A major reason for this pessimism was that:

> "I think a lot of racing lads are a bit independent and they don't like to be told what to do - especially this sort of thing, and if there's something they don't want to do they won't do it."

With the same sort of sentiment another lad argued that:

> For me to go on strike or refuse to do anything it would have to be done 100% by everyone before I would consider it." and that
>
> "Well it's not so much being out on a limb on my own, it would

> just be pointless to say I'm not going racing. They'd say alright and say to someone alright you go. So there'd be no point in me turning it down."

There is, in other words, considerable doubt about collective support for any action, 'half the lads would be in and half out'.

However, two-thirds of the members were disposed to believe that things had improved in the last few years as a result of the activities of the union/association though it was not a firm belief. The pay rises, it was argued, were 'not that significant that you would notice'. Most replies were somewhat ambivalent:

> "I would say that we've got a few more days' holiday then we ever did have had and we have had a couple of rises since this thing has been in, whether it's been through the Stable Lads' Association or it's been a cost of living rise or what I wouldn't know."

Only one lad, for example, pointed to the minimum wage machinery as a real achievement in these terms.

Despite the outward badge of membership, it would be difficult to argue that these workers were enthusiastic members of their organisation. However, it also seems evident that this disposition is borne of perceptions of the actual and likely efficacy of collective organisations among their colleagues in their industry. Some have painful recollections of the attempt to assert collective strength which act as a filter through which perceptions of current developments and future potential are sifted. The perspectives then are more the result of lessons learned and loss of a deferential reflex response to a system of traditional authority with the employer at the centre. This is an observation which also seems applicable to the 'non-members' and will be returned to later.

Non-Members

The forty-six respondents in the sample who were not at that time members of a collective work organisation, whether recognised as a trade union or not, are as difficult to 'pigeon-hole' as were the members. They spanned the age range of the sample as a whole and possessed as wide a range of perspectives as the much smaller group of 'badge holders'. In other words, as other studies of trade union organisation have shown, the differences between members and non-members may not be as significant as those within them. If a further warning were needed of the danger of 'snap-shot analyses', of reading fixed and impermeable characteristics into static descriptions, then the fact that at one time a sizeable minority of the non-members had indeed been members of the Transport and General Workers Union in racing, might serve as another reminder in this context.[8] More than a third (18) reported that at one time they had been members of that organisation while in racing. All of them were members during the period in the early to mid-70's when the union was particularly active, though some of them could also recall earlier initiatives which are discussed later. On examining the personal biographies of the non-members, the finding emerges that if one excludes from consideration those workers who were either out of racing in that period (specifically 1975) or were not in Newmarket or who had not yet entered the industry (22), then the proportion of previous members rises of three-quarters (18 out of 26). Even bearing in mind the formal limitations on the representativeness of these numbers, this finding affords some credence to the union claims regarding membership at the time of the strike (a point which became symbolic of the ideological dimensions of the dispute) and, for example, to the recollection of one lad that 'most of the lads were members at the time'.

Hence it seems a reasonably safe conclusion to say that most the lads who have been in the industry at Newmarket for at least five years were members of the T&G in racing even if they are now non-members. While in due course the view will be established that overall the occupation is wary of 'collectivism', it would clearly be a mistake to assert that there was a pervasive and permanent anti-union current running through it.

Ex-Members' Reasons for Leaving and 'The Strike'

However, of the ex-members nearly half suggested that they left for reasons to do with the strike (including the one female ex-member), a number of the SLA members who had been in the union at the time of the strike, were in a similar position, including one who had formally resigned.

Table 36 Reasons for Leaving the Union

	Number of Respondents
The 1975 Strike	8
Left the yard/job	7
'Got nothing out of it'	2
'No special reason'	1
	18

Most workers, however, had not taken the latter step and had merely let their membership lapse in the post-strike situation a step, however, which was often premissed on a definite view on what had taken place during and after the strike. Indeed, it is virtually impossible to evaluate present perspectives in the absence of the mediating role of the strike and it will be evident that some of the following accounts of ex-members replicate many features of members' accounts. The following worker, for example, could reflect on the strike with rather more irony than bitterness even if time had

not helped to heal some of the more painful memories; his 'admission' of past membership was made with a wry smile:

> "We had the big strike like, well that could have been over in two days ... we kept pressing on and pressing on ... and Lord Wigg said 'don't do the Derby', well that was the best part to do ... you'd hit the public as well as everybody else, we should have stopped it completely. No, he said don't stop the Derby meeting, I'll get what you want - so we never touched the Derby, but we never got anything out of it, that's when I decided to come out of it, we had no money we just couldn't carry on living, I just had to pack up and get back to work ... when I went back they all went back from our yard, a week before the strike was over, I packed the union in then ... the strike was badly handled."

In relation to another interview item, to be discussed more fully below, this respondent went on to broadly agree that 'unions and horses don't mix':

> "if someone calls a strike you just can't leave the horse, I know we did - but they can't help it - there must be some other way round the matter of getting what you want."

and

> "in our yard the union is a black word, he doesn't like the union, when the strike was over, he said he'd pack up if we ever did it again."

It should be noted at this point that this 'striker', a family man in middle age, had spent his working life in the industry in Newmarket - an observation which will be of relevance when looking at some 'third party' accounts of the strike. However, the tenor of this view is that this tactic, for whatever reason, did not work rather than one expressing an endemic distate for collective organisation which, nevertheless, in his experience clearly had its limitations.

A different but forceful emphasis on the meaning of the strike is

offered by another lad in similar domestic circumstances. His reason for leaving the union was his perception that he and his immediate work mates had been let down by the union, particularly in the matter of their dismissal as a result of the strike, it was he argued a 'personal matter'. The respondent related how, at the time of the strike, he had been working in one of the best yards in town, top wages, the best owners and so on. He could not see the sense in the strike from the point of view of his yard's situation. He had been in one or two 'skirmishes' before in racing and he knew how they ended up; he pleaded with his workmates not to go out. However, in contrast to the lack of solidarity which he forecast would display itself sooner or later, he deferred to the decision of his union colleagues in the yard and came out with them, the majority of the yard:

> "Well I was on strike for fourteen weeks, not that I agreed with it ... we lost and we got sacked, the strike was over the week after we got sacked but it was a farce ... but apart from that it learned me a big lesson, it also learned me that whatever you say there's always some bloody monkey who will misinterpret you and cash in on what you say, getting the credit for using your intelligence ... this is what I believe, so I've never followed up the S.L.A. or anything like that. Although I only wish that when I hear what goes on, that I was there at some of the meetings you know. A lot of the things they say are bollocks ... when they say they can't afford this, can't afford that, it gets up my back, that's the really hurtful thing with me ... and there's so much money available, there's umpteen ways you can get money out of racing that would get us a better deal."

He then went on to outline in some detail a masterplan somewhat akin to a tote monopoly and then some further reflections on the strike:

> "See it's alright being on strike outside of a factory with say 97 on strike and 3 working ... or 99% of them are out, you'll probably win the strike - 'like that' - but you won't win a strike when the job you're in is still going - and you're out and they offer you your job back and you refuse it, you've had it. There's no way you'd get in that frame of mind again because the majority of lads are semi-literate, they couldn't hold a bloody conversation with you, unfortunately, but that's the name of the game, I can't help that."

Perhaps in a crystallised form this worker expresses a number of features dispersed in the discussion so far, namely a severe criticism of the conduct of the strike, a certain scepticism as to the capacities of fellow workers to pursue such action (extending into personal critique), and the implicit assertion of the value of indepedence. While undoubtedly a battle weary respondent, it is also clear that these reverses have done little to soothe the resentment harboured by the worker.

Again it is evident that the membership status of the racing lad is not an especially reliable guide to allegiances or the potential for organisation. Though varying in emphasis, these two accounts represent one of the important interpretative dimensions of the strike with implications for the evaluation of the potential of collective action, namely that of instrumentality and effectiveness, one which was evident among the 'members' with similar experience. Superficially it seems unlikely that either of these two workers or others like them, would endorse renewed union organisation - though it will be evident that such reverses have been countered in the past - but it should be clear that such a reticence could not be seen to spring from profound ideological dispositions or to be taken as permanent.

The Meaning of the 'Union'

Such situations of perceived failure seem likely to make subjects particularly vulnerable to alternative accounts of 'unions', 'the union' or whatever, emanating from local elite sources and the output of national cultural institutions such as the media. At the least as Davis (1979) implies in his recent study of social consciousness, it is a situation likely to be productive of inconsistency in perspectives. Indeed there is some evidence of unsolicited media cliches such as 'trade unions have too much power' being distributed

among responses, though not as much as might have been expected. While there was no convenient way of measuring the extent to which such comments were spontaneously offered, the last observation is supported by the kind of response to an item which did quite explicitly use a well worn 'gem' of employer ideology discussed below. However, as a case where the above process seems to have occurred, the following example might be cited:

> "I'm not a union man, never have been but I think they've done a lot of good. In other respects I think they're getting too much now, too many strikes, now they are cutting their own throats in the end. It's like trying to get this game into a union - biggest part of us did'nt want to join - I don't - I'm not saying the unions might not come into racing because they might do. Probably it's my generation going out and this new generation coming in will think the unions ... the last lot, when the strike was on, the biggest part of the lads that was in; this strike was most them was hard boys, real yobos, what came back into racing, a week before the strike they came back in, and they was real cowboys most of them. All drinking and they didn't want to work at the best of times, they came back in to go on strike - and that's genuine and all. A lot of the lads on strike was frightened not to go on strike."

In perhaps a less articulate form the account of this ex-member and, for a short time, striker, rehearses many of the aspects of the version favoured by the racing establishment and the employers. The previous two or three examples are illustrations of some of the ways in which the strike experience affected workers' allegiances. The suggestion advanced is that for many of the workers, the experience was one with pragmatic rather than ideological implications, though it is possible, as is evident in the above example, for ideology to mediate the interpretation. For other workers, however, including non-strikers, the experience undoubtedly confirmed previous convictions. One highly individualistic and instrumental worker who was in the union but did not heed the strike call because "I don't see why you should strike and leave animals starving", had definitely become 'anti-union'. There was no way, he argued, that he would join a union again even if his

yard became organised, stable workers definitely did not need a strong trade union. Equally he felt the dispute could have been handled another way for example, through working to rule. Hence, as I put it to him, he did not rule out industrial action altogether but he was against the union. This rather contradictory position was possibly reinforced by his claim that he had just been 'blacked' by the union from another job (outside of racing) because of his action during the strike. Nevertheless, this worker was actively pursuing the solution to 'poor wages' in racing adopted by many previously, that is by leaving, and which further warns against any simple reading off of non-unionism or anti-unionism with attitudinal deference or deferential patterns of action.

A third of ex-members suggested they were no longer in the union because they had subsequently changed jobs to a non-union yard or firm outside of racing.[9] It is probable that their membership would have lapsed anyway in the same manner as it did for many other workers. However, in this group were a number of ex-strikers who had been effectively blacklisted for eighteen months to two years following the strike. By the time they got back into racing not much remained of the union organisation developed before the strike, as the following lad economically explained for a number of colleagues:

> "It's because of not enough people staying in ... it became a waste of time staying in with only a few in you can't do anything, it's no good. I'd have been the only one in this yard, I was the only one in this yard, I was the only union man there when I started in racing again, there was no point in being the only one, it will be years before anything starts again, it might never do."

The respondent went on to give an account of the strike and 'tribunal' for his unfair dismissal claim and echoed a familiar sentiment, "that's why we're where we are because they just won't stay together."

Non-Members in General and Unionism

The non-members were asked if they had any serious objections to joining a union in racing. Rather surprisingly just over two-thirds (69%) intimated that they did not have a really serious objection on this issue. However, in retrospect the question should have attempted to differentiate examples of 'union', i.e. between the T. & G., an established general union, and the S.L.A., the 'staff association' type. The subject of the S.L.A. had by this time in the interview, been explictly raised and it is more than likely that this reply masked the preference for something like the latter over the former. The S.L.A. was seen by many as a 'racing union' or similarly as it turned out, not really a union at all, that is one 'that wasn't going to go on strike all the time'.

The theme of the 'racing union' was a noticeable undercurrent in the responses and to an extent reflects another aspect of the received wisdom on the strike and its proto-history, namely the view that the union did not really understand racing; comments such as 'they were trying to run it on a clock on, clock off basis' and ' you can't switch off an animal' and so on, were frequently made at this and other junctures during the conversations. Much was made of the working backgrounds of the officials involved at the time and much of this also seeped through into occupational consciousness, 'what did they know about racing?'. It is obviously not the purpose to judge the accuracy of these perceptions, and this kind of problem is clearly generic for a general union but the failure of the union to counter these judgements probably cost a lot of ground, as does its present inability to communicate its role in wage negotiation machinery.

In any event, a good proportion would have sympathy with the view of

this lad, a middle-aged stableman who had spent the major part of his working life as a stud groom, (his job at the time of the strike) who suggested briefly that "we need some sort of body but it's got to be somebody who knows about racing". Interestingly, for a worker who spent much of his career in a work situation most amenable to the development of deferential interaction and perspectives, i.e. as a relatively isolated worker with unmediated face-to-face contacts with upper class employers, he went on to argue that the S.L.A. had no real bite, and that "the way they held the strike was all wrong". What they should have done was "what they did in France, everybody does their horses but nobody goes racing, the T. & G. would have to join in because of the Transport, the boxes, i.e. work to rule". Nevertheless, at the moment he could not see that there was a union that 'could do us any good'.

As elswhere, the instrumental theme is also apparent. One lad is recalled as not having any objections to a union but that in relation to his yard where the wages were not bettered and the pool very good, 'top expenses', it was hardly necessary. Another well-travelled lad explained:

> "Well if the union bloke came round here and said his piece I would join probably, it's only 10p, what's 10p ... I think they're trying to do good, I don't think they'll do any good! But what they're doing ... It's got to be in my interest and the interests of racing. They'll never break the establishment."

An elaboration of this theme is provided by a lad who like one or two others in the sample was able to earn extra money in the winter by riding a few jumpers. He had worked with racehorses since before leaving school from the age of 12, had been tutored by one of the 'old school' of trainers and was now in his mid-20's. While he had never belonged to a union he had no objections to joining one:

> "No if I wasn't riding then I would be in the T & G only because I think it would benefit racing. Because I'm making a comfortable living at racing, making it pay, doing very nicely off it, financially I'm alright. But the state the game's in now, if I didn't get any rides I'd be out tomorrow, so I wouldn't be in it long enough to make my voice count, I'd be away."

Hence some concern for the game as a whole is tempered by the view that an individualist strategy would be more effective in remedying a personal situation. However, in this one instance it may be possible to see the ambivalent potential which may be masked by strident individualism. The same respondent for example gave the following 'observer' account of the strike in the context of a discussion about job security:

> "... but we've got no muscle behind us - the stableman's got no muscle. You are always relying on the generosity of the trainer to give you a pay rise. Or in the last year or so it's just started to be negotiated by the T. & G.W.U., there was a strike a few years ago but it came to nothing at all and you lost a lot of good racing lads through it. The trainers thought that they'd won at the time but they didn't win because all that happened in the end was that racing lost. Simply because you'd got men who could see what I can see in the game, going downhill, simply because of trainers undercutting one another and the poor man subsidising the rich man really. Lads trying to survive in racing on a very low wage so that the trainer could attract more owners who are paying next to nothing for their horses to be trained ... Things were reaching rock bottom and of course ... I've got a lot of views on it ... a lot of lads never came back into racing. They got beat. And with the press and everybody against them ... I mean in any strike, there was the hangers-on and the people who were going along for the ride but 75%, possibly 80%, of the lads were good genuine stable lads who could see the job going to rack and ruin and wanted to do something about it - and knew they could not survive very much longer in racing on the wage they were earning. So they did something about it. The press and one or two other factions especially on the television, were making, were saying they were throwing glass on the horse walks which they weren't, well one lad had done it, it was probably one of the lads who was just out for a bloody ride, along with the strike ... big thing, and enjoy while it was about, we lost a lot of good lads through the strike."

This worker went on to describe the predicament of one such lad, a close friend, who 'wouldn't give in' and who was now 'turning out good caravans

instead of good horses'. He blamed the unions as well because had he been a top T. & G. man he would have brought the whole weight of the union down to help what could not have been a more deserving case. 'The top brass should have been there' instead of which there were union members (horse box drivers) taking horses to races and so on. Again the accuracy or otherwise of the account is not at issue, however, what is evident is that individualistic strategies may co-exist with collectivist sentiments; which occupies the ascendancy at any one time will tend to depend on the perceived reality in the sense of 'real option' and, it seems reasonable to assume, the extent to which frustrations can be accommodated by individual market strategies.

It is relevant to observe here that although the relatively high turnover of labour in the industry commensurate with the life cycle patterns discussed earlier, may dilute occupational identity and cohesiveness to an extent, by the same token it means that as new entrants are taken on, the occupational memory, even in terms of indirect experience of something like the strike, is foreshortened. The potential for the rediscovery of old grievances and renewed organisation is reproduced by this pattern. The historical pattern indeed lends some credence to this observation.

As noted, about a third of the sample reported that they did have strong objections to joining a union. A simple attempt was made to differentiate between what might be termed ideological and instrumentally-based objections. Obviously this is a rather porous distinction, ideological objections can derive from instrumentally relevant personal experiences and, conversely, it is perfectly possible for ideological/political convictions to be expressed in instrumental terms and other nuances are no doubt possible. However, to the extent that the

distinction may be viable, the 'objectors' split roughly 50/50 around it.

Table 37 Types of Reasons for Serious Objections to Joining

	No. of Respondents
Instrumental reasons (e.g. 'wouldn't do much good')	6
Ideological reasons (e.g. 'don't believe in unions')	8
Total	14

Some of the reasons why people might object to joining a union in racing on calculative grounds have been implicitly registered already. However, an interesting illustration is provided by a lad in his fifties, still riding out as a paid lad though with experience has head lad in a once prestigious yard. His views on unions had crystallised while working in metal manufacture in the Midlands in a spell out of racinq where 'we were always on strike'.

> "I could earn good money, £30 ... I'm going back twenty-odd years now ... Thirty quid one week, five the next because it was always unofficial, you couldn't live."

He was now:

> "very biased against unions, if I had to, if it was a closed shop I would join ... you'd have to ... as I said nobody's ever approached me to join one. I wouldn't like it but if I had to fair enough. It's a matter of principle now ... once bitten, twice shy, I've seen how they work that's it."

Among the workers who might broadly be described as ideological objectors a common feature was the untheatrical but firm assertion that they were not 'union men' or that they 'just did not believe in unions'. While a virulent 'anti-unionism' was evident in a couple of responses, on balance it seemed

that 'non-unionism' was a more representative stance. Again an older worker who had evidently experienced some downward occupational mobility, having once been a 'private' trainer and now a paid lad commented that:

> "I'm not a union man, I always prefer to express my own side of things."

Like a previous respondent, he was also working on a nearby stud at the time of the strike and volunteered a similar analysis of the event in terms of its 'dreadful' organisation and the alternative 'work-to-rule scenario' described by the other respondents. Despite his personal view of unions, however, and perhaps a little paradoxically, he believed there could be a place for a union in racing 'if they left it to racing people'. Perhaps it is worth recapitulating at this point to stress that even if the degree of explicit anti-unionism is relatively small, very few are enthusiastic 'collectivists'. However it is doubtful if they are very much different from the majority of British workers on this score.[10] In any event, just over half the workers thought that they probably would join a work based organisation, union or association if their yard became organised which meant that about a quarter of 'non-objectors' were uncertain or unwilling to commit themselves.

The Sample as a Whole, Common Themes and Ambiguities

In the discussion of the varied perspectives of 'non-members' a number of themes have been seen to be shared with the 'members'. Further doubt on the significance of the simple membership distinction is cast by responses to items which were put to the whole sample irrespective of membership. As intimated earlier, one such item mobilised a well worn cliche of establishment ideology which the respondents were asked to agree with or otherwise and then through probing, comment upon. The question ran as follows: 'Many trainers and others say that horses and union/associations don't

mix. Would you agree or disagree with this?'. Many objections might be brought to bear against this question on procedural grounds. It is clearly seems a leading and intimidatory question, in addition to possible nuances of meaning that the terms themselves might contain. Despite these problems it did seem that, in practice, respondents knew what one was talking about and the item proved a useful and productive cue, though needless to say the bare findings need to be treated with some caution. Given that the leading aspect of the question favoured agreement, it is interesting that the majority (44.8%) disagreed with this statement, slightly fewer (39.7%) assented and a not insignificant group (15.5%) found it difficult to conclude one way or the other.

However, a number of paradoxes were apparent. Among those agreeing with the statement were some 'members' and some workers who said they would join if the yard were organised. Similarly many non-members obviously disagreed with the statement including two who reported strong objections to joining an organisation like a union! Whatever the nuances though, what is surprising given the fact that such a populist, ready-made establishment view is so readily available in the industry, is that more workers did not agree with it. Hence on this basis alone it would be dubious to see such an item (as it possibly could be) as an index of attitudinal deference mediating orientations to unionism in the occupation. In any event, as was evident from the discussion of the occupational culture, there is a certain scepticism towards what trainers are prone to say, one as we have seen which extends to questioning the 'mystery' of training itself. Predictably, a major current among the dissenters was the view that it was in the trainers' interests to hold this view. A member argued:

> "I think that's bloody mindedness on the part of the trainers. A lot of these trainers have been getting away with bloody murder for

> years - bloody murder. I think now that the lads are going to get a better deal - they'll never get a good, first class deal but they'll get a better deal than they have been getting and a lot of trainers don't like it because they've always been able to predict if you like ... we'll pay for that ... couldn't turn round and say we're putting in for a £5 rise - they'd meet once a year and say we're giving you a £1 a week rise ... they told you what you were going to get you couldn't ask."

Similarly, two non-members argued respectively:

> "They're only feathering their own nest by saying that aren't they."
> and
>
> "They've always said that, if it works in Australia why can't it work here."

The latter was obviously a comment from a lad who had spent several years in Australia (a 'worker's paradise' he called it) where racing lads (strappers) are better organised. Most of the replies in this category were along these lines, though others such as the following, included the assertion of the need for an organisation whatever the employers thought and was made by a young lad just out of his time:

> "I wouldn't agree with it. At the root of it all - to them it's their horses ... but to us it's a job, employment, like anything else, it's not a game, we're not playing at it."

The overwhelming reason given by assenters, however, was one which revolved around the perceived inability of unions to cope with the special nature of racing and of working with animals; 'you couldn't leave the animals to starve', 'you can't switch them off like a machine', 'you couldn't run racing on a clock basis' and so on. Many non-members and members alike had their opinions on appropriate industrial action but the view seemed to be that, to date, no union had shown itself able to adapt to the features of the industry and their perceptions of union operations in general gave little confidence that this would be likely. (Even one lad who explictly said he

would like to join a union had this fear). Hence this group agreeing with the statement seemed to do so on largely reasoned grounds rather than as a reflex, acquiescent response to employer ideology. It also seems likely that it represented a contingent view rather than one endemically founded, that is, many respondents might be open to persuasion through real actions.

Deferential Perspectives?

To round off this area of data it may be useful to briefly report on other related items which appeared in various parts of the interview schedule. For example, in the context of a series of cues shown on a printed card (see Appendix I, p. 34, q.85), partly designed to tap attitudinal deference, just over half of the sample (55.2%) agreed with the statement that stable workers needed a strong trade union.

However, two of the 25% of dissenters put this and perhaps all 'trade union power' questions into their proper context when they argued as one of them put it:

> "Well that's bloody silly really ... because they had the bloody well ... well you couldn't get a stronger union that the Transport and General Workers' Union, it's the biggest union in the country and that didn't make any difference ... bloody sold them down the river."

As could be predicted from replies to the 'invisible man item' only four of the respondents thought that the lads had enough (or 'any' as some of them put it) of a 'say' in the industry. In addition, on explanation of their content, the proposals by the Rothschild Commission for worker representation in the industry[11] elicited general agreement (85%) and approval though reservations were voiced about who would represent whom.

Again it would be erroneous to over-interpret replies to isolated cues such as these, but clearly while they neither add up to a coherent ideology of an aggressive collectivity of workers nor are they a reflection of a totally acquiescent, deferential workforce. A similar conclusion was reached by Newby in his study of farmworkers which also found a low level of 'ideological objection' to trade unionism, a predominantly calculative if low key attachment to the union and a surprisingly high proportion of workers prepared to countenance industrial action (or at least to talk about it). In common with the stable workers, however, this was combined with a sober evaluation of the organisational difficulties of mounting such action and of the likely response from colleagues, that is of the likely extent of solidarity.

Interestingly, Newby also noticed that stockmen "were adamant that they could not allow the animals in their charge to suffer and they were not prepared to go on strike and see this happen" (Newby, 1977a, p. 266). This is a view in the abstract with which few racing lads would disagree although, in practice, a good many were prepared to contradict it in 1975. However, the preference for other forms of industrial action than the strike, which was frequently expressed, is obviously informed by this attachment to the animals. This has already been discussed and it need only be reiterated that these feelings are neither rationalisations for misgivings with other sources, nor misplaced moments of sentimentality, but are rooted in the nature of the production process. This characteristic also suggests another noteworthy, if contradictory, parallel with the farmworkers. Newby implies that some of the ambivalence displayed by his sample towards trade unionism may be accounted for by the association of trade unions with the 'urban', a congruence which cuts across farmworkers' self-perceptions of distinctiveness vis-a-vis urban industrial workers (Newby, 1977a, p. 263). While it is clear that rural symbolism played no discernible part in the racing lads'

perspectives - most after all had an urban background - it is evident from the material discussed thus far that a similar perception of distinctiveness pervades those perspectives and is reflected in the view concerning the appropriateness of the union for racing.

Racing Lads in Context

The farmworkers provide an obvious point of reference for the racing lads, but many of the features in their relation to collectivism find echoes among industrial workers. The process workers in the chemical industry studied by Nichols and colleagues (Nichols and Armstrong, 1976; Nichols and Benyon, 1977) for example, displayed very similar perspectives including severe doubt on the subject of solidarity (and a lack of solidarity in practice) and a suspicion of the meaning of trade unionism as it applied to them; in one worker's experience, for example, they argue:

> "Trade unions have been weak, unrepresentatives and liable to sell out sections of their membership. There is nothing in such experiences to demonstrate the possibility of effective collective action in his own and his workmates' interests." (Nichols and Armstrong, 1976, p. 161)

This might be applied to the racing lads with little qualification.

Davis's study of craftsmen in the petro-chemical industry also strikes some pertinent cords. The maintenance fitters who share a craft consciousness, "a consciousness of achievement in work" (Davis, 1979, p. 90) and a number of ideals and assumptions (Topoi) in ways reminiscent of the racing lads, also display a marked lack of personal identification with the union. However, the author argues that this needs to be seen against the background of industrial peace in the plant; the workers expected the union to work without making demands on them and adopted a very passive stance.

Davis is, nevertheless, able to point to a contradictory potential for both action and reaction in this consciousness and in the apparent inconsistency between generalised, mediated social criticism of the unions and their description of the need for their own union and their expectations of it. Overall, though, the fitters in common to a great extent with the racing lads, evidence a group consciousness at the plant level but do not locate themselves in a wider reference group of craftsmen with common interests.

Given that it seems possible to compare sensibly the stableworkers with workers in these vastly different industries, further doubt (following the work of Newby, 1976, 1977a) must be cast on the received notions of deference and its sources which have haunted much industrial and political sociology in Britain in the last two decades. The racing lads experience a particularistic work situation, with close face to face interaction with employers and not infrequent exposure to elite and upper class figures yet are capable of displaying perspectives and patterns of action not unknown to core industrial workers. This point will be returned to later but it will first be instructive to consider more fully the brief history of collective organisation in the occupation and the portentous strike of 1975.

Collective Organisation

The problems of interpreting subjective and attitudinal material in the absence of historical reference points are well known and have afflicted a number of industrial studies in particular.[12] A historical perspective is necessary if an attempt is to be made to capture processes as these are not always revealed in 'snapshot analyses'. The following historical account of the development of collective organisation will serve to situate and confirm the lines of interpretation pursued above in relation to 'collectivism' in the industry.[13] It will show the latent opposition to collective organisation

among employers and authorities. What will also become evident is that employers have found problematic and perhaps increasingly so, the art of maintaining what Newby (1975) terms the 'deferential dialectic'. In other words, the delicate balance tension between differentiation and identity which is involved in all hierarchial relationships but which is especially important to patterns of traditional authority. It will also become apparent that the potential for collective action is consistently regenerated by the employment relationship. It follows that it is a mistake to read off events such as single disputes and the reactions to them as once and for all signals of the way the occupation relates to collective action. What should also be clear, however, is that for much of this history, the formal means of representation itself reflected the dominant paternalistic authority pattern or mode of control in the industry.

Early Trade Union Involvement

There appears to be no evidence of attempts at collective organisation among the stable lads before the late 1930's and while just short of an historical accident, initial trade union engagement in the industry is not without its bizarre features. It is quite clear that recruitment of stablemen into the T.& G.W.U was largely unintended though not unwelcome, consequence of a general organisational campaign conducted by the National Agricultural Committee of the Agricultural Trade Group of the union in 1937; an initiative itself spawned by internal union politics. Thus the impetus for this campaign had deeper roots and emerged from the concern which the General Secretary, Bevin, had for the organisation and the future of the section throughout the 1930's, in fact since the amalgamation with the Workers Union which had brought some farmworkers into the T. & G. fold. Not surprisingly, the agricultural group was organisationally by far the most problematic during the 1930's. In 1934, for example, Bevin proposed to

investigate the whole question of the organisation of the group and subsequently arranged meetings with officers of the section to formulate more productive machinery for organising the agricultural workers.[14] This marked the beginning of a more active involvement with such workers and one which led Bevin and the union to a discovery of the stableworker.

This renewed interest in land workers was largely unrewarding. Bevin then devised an organising scheme, with considerable financial sanction from his G.E.C., designed to circumvent the branch system which he held to be inappropriate in the countryside. It was hoped that the scheme would lead to a considerable extension of membership; were it to fail the whole future of the section was to be reconsidered. In the event neither occurred.[15] Bevin's brainchild was extended with little success to other areas[16] and he, like many others before and after, found himself puzzled by workers who, he suggested:

"are individualist, scattered and difficult to organise."[17]

His hope that the propaganda effort in the countryside would at least help rural organisation generally was also over-optimistic.

Despite further reviews and initiatives progress was painfully slow. The 1936 Insurance Act which Bevin hoped would give farmworkers a measure of independence and the recognition that they "were no longer dependent on the local squire and politician" also failed to have the desired effect.[18] While he had clearly seen something of the basis of deference in rural communities, he had obviously over-estimated the effect of such legislation on the structure of traditional authority and hence on unionism in the countryside.

Later in 1936 a conjuncture of managerial succession provided the opportunity for more drastic organisational changes in the wake of which an even more vigorous campaign launched along the lines of the 'Lorry Drivers' Special' was initiated.[19] The relative failure of the subsequent 'Farmworkers' Special' generated some despondency[20] and a further fruitless strategy centred around the rural road worker in order to develop the group as a 'rural' rather than 'agricultural' section.[21]

However, the main consequence of this otherwise disappointing series of initiatives was the upsurge in union activity in the major horserace training areas, Newmarket and Lambourn. In this Bevin took an immediate and enthusiastic interest, marking the beginning of an essentially paternalistic style of trade union involvement in the industry which, arguably, lasted until the 1970's. To an extent this mirrored the representative style of the union as a whole during this period.[22] The frequent reports on the state of membership among the stablemen diverted attention and lifted morale among the national officers of the group.[23] However, the original claim and offer of arbitration were rejected by the employers who only consented to an agreement following the intervention of the influential owner-breeder, Lord Derby, in negotiation with Bevin. Hence, though a collective agreement, it was in fact manufactured out of the paternal influence of two individuals.

The union claimed 600 new members in Newmarket and district and organisation appears to have remained vibrant during 1938. Branches were set up in Middleham and Malton although at Beverley employers increased wages to forestall organisation. The attempt to use the Newmarket agreement to negotiate with employers in other areas, i.e. Epsom and Lambourn was initially unsuccessful. Eventually the Surrey Trainers Associated accpeted an agreement in time for the coming flat season of 1938 but in Lambourn the

Trainers refused point-blank to accept the agreement or negotiate over it, a stand which led to a long drawn out and bitter dispute.

Despite approaches from the Ministry of Labour the employers remained firm in what clearly amounted to a 'recognition' issue. Their stand provoked a ballot of the membership and a strike call sanctioned by the General Executive Council of the union.[25] The ensuing action received considerable publicity within and outside Trade Union circles and also some attention from the local constabulary which somewhat miraculously had grown to some 300 men following the decision to strike![26]

While the strike received continued union support and some employers did indeed capitulate, it was largely fruitless. By the time the strike had ended many workers had drifted away from the area following the outbreak of war in 1939. Nevertheless, despite the quickly learned conflict tactics of the employers and their use of unskilled 'blackleg' labour, the stablemen exhibited remarkable solidarity and organisation remained strong in yards in which the agreement had been established. However, with the drastic curtailment of racing, the outbreak of war had a serious effect on organisation in all areas, though in Newmarket, on which racing was to be centred during the war, a presence was maintained until 1940 when it was reported that most of the membership had been lost. Nevertheless, a branch continued during the war whence care of the section was explicitly delegated to the National Trade Group Secretary.[27]

Post-War Organisation

The immediate post-war period remained bleak for racing and organisation was everywhere dormant until renewed stirrings in 1950. The leadership, conscious of its top heavy role vis-a-vis the membership, activated several

organising meetings which revealed approximately 50% membership and widespread dissatisfaction with existing procedural and substantive norms. However, the leadership refused to lodge a fresh claim in the absence of improved organisation. The threat produced only a slight increase in membership density at Newmarket but this allowed the leadership to relent while continuing to stress the need for greater organisation if pressure on the employers were to be effective.[28]

Organisation was all but extinct elsewhere. An intensive effort in Lambourn in 1953 met with the customary employer resistance and a further bout of organising meetings took place in 1960, but the small gains in membership were insufficient to galvanise organisation and 1966 saw delegates again requesting that increased attention be paid to workers in the industry there who generally fared much worse than in Newmarket. This in part prompted the first major research effort by the union on the industry coinciding, as it did, with the recognition by General Secretary Cousins that the trade group was a potential growth area.[29] Towards the end of the 1950's the union was able to tap the ground-swell of dissatisfaction in the Yorkshire centres and branches were again established in Malton and Middleham. However, organisation was frustrated by the trainers' refusal to negotiate on a collective basis.[30] In pursuing this strategy the trainers called upon some now familiar arguments concerning the irrelevance of a 'large trade union' to their relations with their employees.[31] Under pressure from the union, the Ministry of Labour made several interventions in the dispute which was eventually referred in 1958 to an Industrial Disputes Tribunal which found in principle for the union. However, the continued refusal of the employers to negotiate meant that finally 16 individual submissions to the I.D.T. were necessary before employers began to implement parts of the current Newmarket Agreement.

The virulent reaction of the employers and their effective limiting of the right of the union to negotiate for members discouraged many employees though branches were maintained, if passively, until the upsurge of activity and interest in the early '70's. Meanwhile, at Epsom, despite organisation attempts in 1960 (when a dispute at Newmarket spilt over into other areas) and 1963, the union presence had been at best token. The 1960's were also a decade of fluctuating but generally brittle strength at Newmarket.

In 1970 the racing section was affected by organisational changes within the union with the incorporation of the National Agricultural Trade Group within the new Food, Drink and Tobacco Industries Group. The apparent incongruity of the inclusion of the racing stables in this Group was not lost on the leadership,[32] but it failed to translate this concern into an attempt to recognise the distinct occupational identity of the racing workers. The racing section was even dropped from mention in Annual Reports. This failure may be seen, in the light of the perspectives reported earlier, to be of strategic significance as it helped to preserve an important source of ambivalence among the stableworkers towards the union.

The year 1970 also marked a turning point in ideology and practice of the union concerning the status of the 'shop floor' with concerted efforts on devolution taking place in many areas. In the racing section this coincided with the arrival of an enthusiastic new organiser in the area which included Newmarket, a conjuncture which had the effect of rekindling interest among the workforce and led to the development of genuine shopfloor organisation for perhaps the first time. Within a short space of time, membership, according to union claims, soared and most Newmarket yards had shop stewards.

Overall, then the union has maintained some presence in Newmarket since the days of Bevin, though elsewhere organisation was more sporadic. In the latter case, in the absence of mediatory influences, the employers maintained a hostile attitude towards collective organisation, often risking ruin in order to abort the embryonic union organisation. One cannot therefore appreciate the reticence of workers vis-a-vis unionism in the absence of a recognition of the costs of the severe reaction of the employers. The dispute of 1975 also showed that after forty years of collective bargaining, the Newmarket employers still latently shared this ideology. In such an appreciation, the sporadic and piecemeal efforts of the union towards the industry also have to be taken into account.

The pattern of union organisation at branch level generally resembled that in many other industries though the inactivity of the branch was not compensated for the informal workplace organisation.[33] In racing, National Officers also played a more prominent part, a relationship which curiously reflected the paternalistic flavour of authority relations in the business as a whole. This pattern remained until the renewed shopfloor initiatives of the early 1970's.

Substantive Agreements

As national officers noted ruefully, peaks in organisation were closely associated with the more spectacular of substantive agreements; interest then often fell away quite quickly. However, despite the swings in membership there is a considerable history of collective bargaining activity. From 1937 until the establishment of National Joint Negotiating Machinery following the strike in 1975, negotiations have been held and substantive agreements reached in all but a handful of years. There were substantial increases in the

war years especially in 1944 and 1945 and the first 'leading out' agreement was reached in 1943.[34] In a sense, however, progress was more apparent than real as 'negotiations' depended on the intermediary role and influence of Lord Derby through whom claims were submitted to the trainers and settled.[35] Collective bargaining amounted to little more than joint paternalism. In 1946 Derby was replaced in this role by Sir Humphrey de Trafford, though formally trainers and union representatives met in concert for the first time with de Trafford acting as 'independent chairman'.[36] Revisions to the Agreement were to be precipitated only at the chairman's discretion but the paternalistic overtones of this procedure were lost on the union representatives at this time.[37]

However, wage increases were achieved in 1946, 1947 and 1949, a period which also saw the consolidation of 'leading out' and overtime clauses, thereby amending the structure of the 1937 Agreement. The year 1947 also witnessed the remarkable sight of the union secretary for the group interceding on behalf of the trainers when it was rumoured that the government was to curtail racing! In 1949, however, the employers had awarded a unilateral pay increase provoking protests from the union and a general complaint about the lack of regular negotiating machinery.[38] While the existing machinery remained until 1955 it was agreed in 1951 that meetings would be held annually.

Throughout the 1950's there was a general reluctance by employers to negotiate on working conditions but in 1955 national officers undertook direct negotiations with the employers for the first time. Following a dispute in 1960, a new agreement was reached at Newmarket and the 1960's saw regular increases in pay but there were still signs of employer recalcitrance. In 1962 the intervention of a conciliation officer from the Ministry of Labour

was required; two years later hostile publicity was mounted by the employers during the course of negotiations. There continued a general refusal to consider working conditions, sickness or pension schemes until in the latter case, promptings from the Levy Board in the late 1960's. The trainers also conveyed a perennial feeling of victimisation by the union as other areas appeared to escape its attention and indeed agreements were reached in Yorkshire much less regularly. At the turn of the decade and into the 1970's, agreements at Newmarket became increasingly wide ranging at which time the initiative for bargaining moved to the local level. 1971, in fact, saw the first agreement negotiated by the district officer.

The history of collective bargaining in the industry is then far from negligible though it is clearly of varying significance. For much of the period it served to reinforce as much as to erode the traditionalist structure of the industry with more representative forms of negotiation being a more recent phenomenon.

Trade Disputes

The 1975 Newmarket dispute was the most dramatic event in the recent Industrial Relations history of the industry, one which took on national proportions with considerable coverage in the media. However, as was intimated earlier, this dispute was by no means the first in the training industry, though not all have led to stoppages of work. While it would clearly be a mistake to represent racing labour as a seedbed of rebellion, equally the relatively placid picture offered by the conduct of formal industrial relations is also liable to overstate the situation. As suggested already, the relatively high circulation of labour within and in and out of, the industry suggests that grievances tend to be resolved individualistically. On this score alone it would be dubious to label this occupational group as

deferential in the sense outlined by Lockwood (1966) for example, that is, content with their lot, placidly accepting their own exploitation. Further, however, considerable resentment was expressed on those occasions when the apparent stability of formal industrial relations was indeed rocked. This suggests the prevalence of an underlying pragmatism towards the employment relation forced by circumstances, rather than a moral endorsement of it.

Such an example is provided by the 1938 strike at Lambourn, clearly a dispute over the right of these workers to be represented by a trade union, but one which also ignited an accumulated pile of grievances and antagonism. The dispute had many of the characteristics of agrarian revolt.[39] What was assumed to be a normally docile, forelock-tugging labour force was transformed into a militant, solidaristic opposition. Long assumed relations of loyalty evaporated overnight, and the rift widened as employers denuded of their traditional supports in an unfamilar situation, resorted to less sophisticated conflict tactics. However strong its reality hitherto, deferential interaction failed to withstand this assault, a classic demonstration that even the most apparently stable forms of control, such as traditional authority, have no life-long guarantee. In retrospect, the Second World War and the curtailment of racing wrought by it, was a timely intervention. The closure of the Lambourn stables during the war period helped to mediate the feelings of bitterness and hostility generated during the dispute. Few strikers would have countenanced the strength of employer resistance and although memories in racing tend to be rather short, the event must have affected subsequent cohorts of workers and employers in their views of collective organisation.

The dispute at Malton in the late 1950's, though less dramatic and involving no stoppage of work, centred on the same theme of recognition,

which in various ways was also a central feature of the 1975 dispute at Newmarket. It also demonstrated one later feature of the emerging employers' ideology, a fear and reluctance to use arbitration machinery. In this dispute 16 different employers needed to be brought before Industrial Dispute Tribunals before agreements were reached.[40] At Newmarket the first threat of a withdrawal of labour during negotiations was not made until 1953 when it appears that the threat was sufficient to expedite matters. A perennial source of disquiet and dispute has been over the treatment of apprentices and the abuse of the apprenticeship system by trainers. By the mid-50's the union had withdrawn from a scheme jointly entered into with the National Trainers' Federation and the Ministry of Labour relating to conditions governing the employment of apprentices because of alleged employer abuse of the scheme. Although the union had formally relinquished responsibility for apprentices, they continued to provide an important source of casework, especially after 1970.

The plight of apprentices also triggered off unofficial stoppage at Newmarket in 1960.[41] Fifty or so apprentices lodged at Heath House, a collective trainer-sponsored hostel for apprentices, went on strike and at first barracaded themselves in the hostel over the sacking of their Welfare Officer. This quickly broadened into a wider issue over their working and living conditions which received widespread and sympathetic press coverage. The 'boys' also received widespread support from the Newmarket workforce among whom it was a common belief that the apprentices were being used as cheap labour, thus undercutting their own position. However, this dispute also sparked some reflection among the stable workers on their own situation and within a matter of days of the apprentices' strike, following widely attended informal meetings, an ultimatum was delivered to the trainers supported by the threat of (unofficial) strike action. Though unofficial strike

action did briefly ensue, the dispute was quickly resolved following the intervention of the National Secretary.[42].

Clearly it appears that these workers were far from incapable of spontaneous industrial action in pursuance of a grievance, a consideration which does not accord with either commonsense or sociological stereotypes of the occupation.[43] Arbitration, for example, was also required in 1961 at Newmarket in pay negotiations and in 1974 the failure of employers to honour a threshold agreement reached in March of that year, led to a call by a mass meeting of lads to withdraw labour. The strike threat was put in abeyance while talks were held with the Newmarket Trainers' Federation over the backdating of payments. Agreement was finally reached at the beginning of August. In January 1975 there was a dispute involving a trainer of the 'old school' over his failure to observe procedure in relation to redundancies in his yard. Local officials saw an important point of principle in the dispute which, if conceded, would undermine procedural agreements. Union members in the yard withdrew their labour with the backing of the Newmarket membership and a total strike threat. The threat remained until a meeting between an officer of the Advisory, Concilliation and Arbitration Service and employer/employee representatives decided to put the matter to arbitration with the workers concerned reinstated in the meantime. The subsequent failure of A.C.A.S. to find for the employer may well have had a bearing on their reluctance during the 1975 dispute to use arbitration machinery.

From the above discussion, it would be difficult to argue that the stable workers as an occupation were experienced in industrial conflict. Equally, it is clear that the occupation was not completely innocent in this respect by the time of the 1975 dispute. The fluctuating and volatile engagement of

the occupation with collective organisation and symbolism since the 1930's is a macrocosm of the ambivalence, uncertainty and lack of confidence vis-a-vis unionism mirrored in individual perspectives discussed earlier. The dispute in 1975 both reflected these features and as we have seen, to a great extent reinforced them. The nature of the 1975 strike was completely consistent with the previous history of collectivism and there is therefore little basis for arguing that conflict emerges with a 'new type' of stable worker in the 1970's.

The 1975 Dispute : Strife at 'Headquarters'

There is a sense, as many industrial relations writers have implied, in which the history of a dispute is the catalogue of the accounts and rationalisations of the participants and onlookers.[44] The quest for the authentic version is a woefully misplaced one. In the context of a study such as this it is also largely irrelevant compared to the 'realities' which these accounts can reveal about the nature of the totality of the object of study. Some moments of that object have been illuminated through the perceptions of the workers who were active in the strike and of those who were not. However, in the following, two further accounts of the strike will be examined. One represents the 'in-house' view of the racing establishment, that is to a greater or lesser degree reflecting the perspectives of the employers, bureaucrats, media and rulers of the turf. The other is an academic account of the strike which, in more sophisticated terms, replicates some of the arguments of the first.

Roger Mortimer's (1979) retrospective rendition of the strike crystallises many of the features of the coverage of the strike by the racing media in particular at the time.[45] There is a transparent aspiration to a rough balance in presenting different sides of the argument, a value which is

ingrained in the ideology of media news reporting. For example, some reference is made to the variable conditions of work in racing stables and the subterranean stratum of poor employers "who could not care less" (p. 344) about their employees; slight doubt is cast on the wisdom of the trainers' stand against a claim for an extra £1.47 per week[46] and their 'perhaps unwise' rejection of arbitration; and:

> "some of the strike leaders were sincere men of excellent character." (p. 344)

Otherwise, however, the account is flavoured with a number of themes which will be familiar to students of media coverage.

Firstly, there is an overwhelming emphasis on the short run effects of the dispute and the dramatic confrontations which occurred on occasion during the course of the strike. Royal Ascot and many other meetings were missing from the T.V. screen as technicians took sympathetic action in support of the strikers spoiling the enjoyment of 'stay at home punters'. Rather more serious, however, was the disruption of the 'Guineas Meeting' at Newmarket and the ensuing so-called 'battle of Newmarket' which was also widely reported in the national press, events which take up virtually half of Mortimer's discussion. Developing their own variations of picketing, the lads prepared to interfere with the running of the 'first classic'[47] by sitting across the course, a tactic which provoked an animated confrontation with a number of racegoers whose 'connections' were uncertain, though Mortimer refutes the widely made charge that they included many prominent racing illuminati. This tactic was repeated two days later for the Two Thousand Guineas, the second classic, although on this occasion the strikers encountered the police with dogs and ironically enough, mounted horse. The official starter's ploy of dispensing with the stalls, however, meant that:

"Happily the start was a good one."

Also in this context, Mortimer cites the report of a fellow racing journalist of how strikers and:

> "hired strong-arm troublemakers who cared as little about horses as many so-called soccer fans do about football"

allegedly commandeered an excavator from a construction site and bulldozed holes in the course (p. 347).

The corollary of this emphasis, of course, is virtually a complete neglect of the source of the dispute and its proto-history. This omission is intimately linked with another prominent theme in the account, namely the marginalisation of the strikers and the implicit labelling of the union as an 'outside' element in the industry, a common device for coping with conflict in traditionalist social structures.[48] The not insubstantial history of union involvement in the industry and the disputes which have occurred are ignored. The author complements this with the generalisation that:

> "People who work in stables are not, as a rule, union minded." (p. 360)

which, as will be evident, understates the complexity of the stance of workers to collective organisation. He adds further that the strike received no support from other training centres and that, at Newarket, far less than 100% actively supported the strike, both of which contentions are half truths at best and need to be seen in the context of the growth of unionism in the early 1970's. As may be evident from the previous paragraph marginalisation is also accomplished by 'guilt by association' of the strikers with "strong arm

trouble makers" and the "riff-raff of Newmarket" "including one recently released from goal" (p. 344). Mortimer raises the common stereotype of the racing lad as the dedicated worker who accepts his humble part and does not hanker after other jobs despite his relatively meagre rewards. Earlier chapters have sufficiently unmasked this view to not bear repeating here. However, this stereotype is then contrasted with that of the feckless labour which has been forced onto the trainers in more recent years because of the 'labour problem'. The implication clearly is that it is this segment (or sediment) which harboured the militant, striking workers; again previous findings cast some doubt on the accuracy of this argument. Further, in this context, the union in the guise of its local representative is presented as a superfluous entity vis-a-vis racing, as obdurate, insensitive and politically motivated, in other words, as an 'outsider'. Finally, in a brief remark relating to the birth of the S.L.A. the author implies that the non-strikers preferred an association of their own whereas it is clear that despite initial success in Labourn, the Association cut very little ice in Newmarket.

As is common in such accounts, very little reported by the author may be said to be totally false. However, as with the hallmark of ideology more generally so much illusion and reality are combined in an amalgam which amounts to a partial and distorted representation. What emerges from this account, however, is a reflection of the general antipathy of a relatively insulated social milieu and traditionally oriented social structure towards what are defined as external threats to stability. Moreover these threats appear in a form, collectivism, which itself is sharply antithetical to the culture of that milieu. Maintaining such a position does, however, involve some rationalisation and forgetfulness, particularly with regard to previous conflicts generated within the confines of the industry.

It is also clear that the neat package of 'faction' embodied in the above account, one representative of the 'elite' version of the strike, can claim a sufficient, if unsteady, foot in reality to make it acceptable as received wisdom for those with only second hand or indeed no experience of the event itself and thus to enable it to infiltrate individual perspectives on and future orientations to, collectivism. Indeed, there is some evidence in the earlier discussion to suggest that this process has in fact occurred. This account then is instructive in identifying the kind of source which has mediated the occupational recollection of the dispute and complicated the uncertainty and ambivalence towards collectivism among the Newmarket labour force at least. Insofar as it may be seen to represent the official version of the dispute it indicates how the racing world coped with this perceived threat and reflects the despair with which the 'managers' of a relatively closed social structure face changes in the traditional order of things; the strong atavistic overtones in the account reflect the yearning for an era in which the sordid realities of a complex industrial society largely passed by the racing hierarchy.

At this point it is also useful to consider briefly a more academic account which the dispute provoked, inadequate as this turns out to be. Eaton (1976) indeed offers a compact explanation of the causes and subsequent course of the dispute which involves the deployment of two classic pieces of British middle range theorisation in sociology. Firstly, the author invokes Runciman's theory of relative deprivation to account for the source of the grievance which eventually provoked the strike. Essentially this is seen to lie in the relative opportunities available to workers at the two major training centres of Lambourn and Newmarket to achieve supplementary income through the customary channels of 'presents', prize-money deductions for the stable and betting with 'inside information'.

It is argued that by the time of the dispute, these rewards had perceptively declined at Newmarket relative to Lambourn causing dissatisfaction among the workforce and prompting a large pay claim to compensate for this deterioration. The second prong of Eaton's thesis is an attempt to explain the course of the dispute, the apparent disaffection among the lads and the divisions developing in their ranks in particular, developments which, as previously seen, are quite significant in the collective memory of the dispute. In this exercise recourse is made to Lockwood's celebrated typology of social consciousness (Lockwood, 1966), whence the division between strikers and non-strikers is held to roughly parallel the dichotomy between the 'instrumental' and 'deferential' worker in Lockwood's terms.

Both of these arguments have a superficial plausibility though neither bears much analysis and the author offers little supporting evidence. The first point is particularly transparent. No direct evidence is cited to support the contention that Lambourn was a specific point of reference in this case and no trace of this argument was found in the interviews with lads involved in one way or another with the dispute even given the observation made in Chapter Seven that occupational horizons were not restricted to Newmarket. However, what this particular hypothesis of relative deprivation ignores are the considerable differences in payment and rewards in the industry within Newmarket. Even following four years of the operation of minimum wage machinery, the standard deviation reported on gross earnings was £8.38 on a mean of £56 and this is in a low wage industry. It is correct to suggest as Eaton does, that the so-called 'perks' are important 'morale-boosters' (leaving aside their significance for the gift relationship ignored by the author); however, it is well known in Newmarket that some yards are much better than others in these terms. In other words, there is as much potential for variations in the levels of perks within the training centre between different

yards as there is between different centres.[49] There is no reason to suppose that perception of the latter would or did swamp the former. It may be that Newmarket had suffered a period of decline, in racing terms, by the time of the dispute, but there is no evidence that the lads defined deprivation in the terms advanced by Eaton.

The second part of the argument is of more general significance but is equally dubious. Here Eaton attempts to socially differentiate types of stable lad to account for developments during the course of the strike. To this end Lockwood's (1966) typology of social consciousness and related work and community settings is applied in an uncritical and straightforward manner to the situation of the lads. It is suggested that the strikers closely coincided with the 'privatised worker' with his money model of society, instrumental orientation to work and so on; the 'traditional master-servant' relationship no longer cuts any ice with these workers. The remaining workers, perhaps the majority, assume the mantle of the 'deferential' worker remaining loyal to their employers. They never supported the strike and resented the intrusion of the union in Newmarket in the first place. In the original formulation, the deferential is said to hold a status hierarchy model of society, normally endorse his own subordination (Parkin, 1971) and is likely to be found in small firm work situations and community settings where traditional elites rule, although the social location part of the argument is not taken up by Eaton. However, for this worker 'who knows his place' there are easy relations with employers. As in Mortimer's account there is the added implication that this division broadly reflects generations with the instrumental worker a representative of more recent recruits to the industry less ready to bow to the prevailing authority system.

While it might be possible to find support for fragments of this

hypothesis, a number of considerations make it difficult to accept. Firstly, it has been shown that, far from being different kinds of people, strikers and non-strikers and present day members and non-members cannot be sharply differentiated and that many of the strikers had many years of experience in the industry and were no less committed to their work - as opposed to the conditions under which it takes place - than many non-strikers. It was also argued in Chapter Six that instrumentalism is not a useful axis on which to polarise these workers because of the enforced permanancy of instrumental considerations on a low wage.

There was no clear evidence that the strikers interviewed were more (or less) preoccupied with money than non-strikers and more generally it appeared that the practice of voting with one's feet was a general one in the occupation. The interpretation by Eaton can also only be sustained if the historical dimension is neglected. If the strike was indicative of the changing nature of the labour force it is then difficult to account for the events at Lambourn in 1939, the general surge in unionism at that time among racing workers and the later disputes at Newmarket.

'Industrial action' did not begin in 1975, and it therefore seems inappropriate to claim that the later dispute and action reflected the emergence of a new type of instrumental, privatised stable worker. Rather the pressures which brought the earlier protests were repeated, the social distance harboured by the occupational community was again, if fleetingly, transformed into an opposition. In 1975 this was catalysed by deeper union organisation though this was insufficient to maintain solidarity and counteract the individualism of the occupational culture. In the responses of workers, however, it is clear that potential for this kind of action has still not been totally extinguished and there is some evidence that the occupation in

Newmarket, at least, has taken some important lessons from the dispute in terms of the strategic problem of the need for solidarity and more specific problems of conflict tactics. Be that as it may, it is clear that the application of the 'privatised', 'deferential' stereotypes in this way obscures much more than it illuminates.

Deference and the Racing Lad

The reservations raised about the adequacy of this approach to social consciousness more generally have already been mentioned. It is worth noting here, however, that the notion of the deferential worker to which the racing lad superficially conforms and which was originally assumed to be the least problematic of Lockwood's ideal types, has also failed to survive careful scrutiny (Newby, 1977a). It is also clear from Newby's (1975) work that the nature of deference has been much misunderstood by recent British sociology. Newby argues that behavioural and attitudinal conceptions of deference (two major strands evident in the literature) are misguided insofar as they confuse the appearance of deference with its essence (for example, behaviour which is apparently deferential is often habitual and calculative) and they focus on individual attributes rather than social relationship and processes (a criticism which has been levelled at the Lockwood model as a whole). It is also difficult for these approaches to explain the not infrequent explosions of unrest which have occurred in traditionalist locations.

Conversely, Newby argues that deference should rather be seen as a form of social interaction:

> "Specifically it is the form of interaction which occurs in situations involving the exercise of traditional authority." (Newby, 1975, p. 146)

Traditional elites need to develop strategies to maintain the loyalty of subordinates because deference is rent by the fundamental contradiction between differentiation, an inevitable feature of hierarchical relationships, and positive identification. These two opposing elements constitute the concept of the 'deferential dialectic'. As such they continually test the stability of the relationship which therefore must be 'managed', often in the face of negative external exigencies (for example, economic conditions) over which the elite may have no control. The inflation spiral of the early 1970's predating the strike may be cited as such an exigency over which employers in the industry had no control but which affected their ability to maintain identification. Newby goes on to outline a number of elite strategies aimed at maintaining the delicate tension between identification and differentiation, an emphasis which has the advantage of focusing attention on the role of elites in understanding the action of subordinates; during the 1975 dispute, for example, the employers used a wide range of tactics to undermine the position of individuals involved in the dispute, especially in the period between the strike call and the strike itself.[50].

This notion of deference can much more fruitfully be applied to an understanding of employment relationships in racing. In discussing employment relationships in Chapter Six it was suggested that the situation was characterised by a traditionalism manque that is where the style of traditionalism was often evident but where the reality was much more ambiguous. Such deference which may appear, therefore, in many cases may also be more apparent than real, representing a praqmatic acceptance on the part of the workers of the situation rather than a positive endorsement of the status quo. It may indeed be that the erosion of deferential interaction in these terms has accelerated in recent years but the events of the late 1930's at least indicate the problematic nature of deference in the more

distant past. This view is also given some credence by the typical social background of lads and the lack of consequent anticipatory socialisation as they usually move from one social milieu and a predominantly working class background to a quite different one. In the context of such a 'traditionalism manque' one would expect to find the inconsistency and ambivalence in attitudinal perspectives which we have already documented in terms of relations with employers and towards collectivism.

However, accepting Newby's stricture that there is not necessarily a monotonic relation between attitudinal deference and deferential interaction, it nevertheless seems appropriate to briefly record that in common with Newby's farmworkers, the sample demonstrated relatively low levels of attitundinal deference. Attitudes to employers and the general scepticism towards the 'trainer's art' have already been noted and responses on other issues of racing politics are similarly sceptical. The respondents were asked to comment on a number of statements, presented on a card, which could evoke deferential sentiments (see Appendix I, p. 34, q. 84). However, over two-thirds, for example, (69%) could not agree that 'most employers in the industry have the welfare of the workers at heart', many emphatically so; three-quarters (77.6%) felt that stablemen should have a greater say in the industry and that racing policy could not be left to the Jockey Club (75.9), a body which attracted much, if stereotyped, criticism of its role and social composition and perhaps not surprisingly, the vast majority (83.7%) failed to agree with the statement that 'Trainers know what is best for the stable and lads should do just what they are told', a statement which understandably was met with a mixture of amusement, incredulity and indignance. Rather more ambivalence was produced by a statement which suggested that lads should follow 'the lead of employers in racing affairs not trade unionists'. Here the largest category of respondents 'did not know' or thought that you

should make your own lead. However, in retrospect this question can be seen to have conflated the issue of deference with that of the role of the union in racing which, as we have noted, many saw as inappropriate; (36.2% agreed, 25.9% disagreed, 37.9% D.K.). On the whole, the lads were not impressed with one well worn piece of employer ideology namely that 'training is not an economic business', an item which produced some sharp analyses of the economics of training. Again, however, the proportion is not overwhelming even if this is a slight measure of attitudinal deference which may admitedly be doubted (58.6% failed to agree). The items were chosen to be specifically close to the workers' experience and interests rather than general political values as have been used in many studies of attitudinal deference. The significance of these items is undoubtedly open to a good deal of interpretation, but it seems clear that within the milieu which they understand, these workers are far from displaying at least the epiphenomena of deference. It also seems doubtful if the uncertain stance towards collectivism recorded in the discussion can be lad at the door of this particular sociologicism. Clearly, the account advanced by Eaton, despite its apparent sociological sophistication, underestimates the complexity of the situation and the significance of the strike in particular.

Conclusion

In the preceding discussion in this chapter, the stableman's stance towards collectivism has been surveyed both at the individual level and in terms of the occupation as a whole in Newmarket, with its not insubstantial history of Trade Union engagement and occasional bursts of conflict with employers. It is evident that there is a broad parallel between these levels. The uncertainty and ambivalence that was evident in individual perspectives is reflected in the wavering and apparently cyclical surges in organisation. These have on occasion resulted in overt conflict as the grievances which are

consistently generated in the employment relationship and which, for the most part, are resolved individualistically, find this periodic collective expression. While rejecting the simple application of the 'deference problematic' as in the work of Eaton discussed above, it may well be that some of this ambivalence does reflect the gradual erosion of traditionalism in the industry such that employment relationships, for example, embody incomplete, fragmented and differing authority systems in the ways described in Chapter Five.

A related factor in considering this ambivalence is the overall culture of the racing business and the ideology of the employers which is decidely anti-collectivist. These represent a considerable barrier to the establishment of collective organisation if for no other reason than that historically the resistance of the employers has been broadly sufficient to stultify its growth. That the history of collective action has been a largely unsuccessful one provides the stuff of further scepticism, a feature which is seen to be well ingrained in individual orientations towards the union. In addition, to manifest opposition from employers one also has to compute the competitive ethos of racing and its 'adventure capitalist' spirit, the entwining of business and sporting imperatives where prizes may be plundered as a reward for skill, judgement or even luck. This is not an atmosphere particularly well-suited to an 'other orientation' and this, together with the fragmented nature of production units, makes the problem of organisation and solidarity perennially difficult, a situation which is well recognised by the workers themselves. Hence, while the occupational community, essentially a community of sociability, is able to harbour many oppositional values and maintain a social distance from employers, it has not been sufficient in the face of these counter-features to sustain an organised opposition.

The 1975 strike, chaotic and naively conducted as it was, did however, bequeath a more lasting legacy than the previous examples of protest. The dispute persisted for thirteen weeks and although less than fifty or so workers were involved at the end, the strike had continued to attract adverse publicity and remained a source of embarrassment to the Turf authorities. The prestigious Guineas, Epsom, Derby, and Royal Ascot meetings had all witnessed some form of well publicised demonstrative action. The Jockey Club, however, attempted to remain above the conflict, deflecting all claims for action and displacing responsibility for the resolution of the dispute to the parties involved. If the Jockey Club could afford to adopt a disinterested view, the position of the Horserace Betting Levy Board was more difficult. As a statutory body with a brief for the improvement of horse-racing as a whole, it could hardly stand idly by while the 'industry' exposed its soft underbelly of dubious employment practices and its reluctance to countenance prevailing procedural norms of industrial relations.

In the event, the Board promised to make available a substantial amount of extra prize money contingent upon agreement to establish national wage negotiation machinery for the industry, and by clear implication, upon the settlement of the current dispute. The desired outcome was quickly forthcoming and the constitution of the National Joint Council for Stable Staffs (N.J.C.S.S.) agreed with uncharacteristic haste. This provided for an independent chairman and equal representation of employers and employees with the T. & G.W.U. predominating over the S.L.A. in employee representation. Since 1976, the Council has agreed minimum wage levels on an annual basis and periodic modifications in working conditions. Its decisions on the minimum wage are now included in the Jockey Club's Rules of Racing, the most important disciplinary code governing the activity.

The N.J.C.S.S. seems likely to continue in its role for the foreseeable future, but its status is finely poised because its legitimacy is underwritten primarily by external agencies rather than being rooted in the mutual interests of the parties. The employers will accede probably only as long as the wider facilitative functions of the Levy Board are recognised as crucial to the viability of their business. For the employee organisations the problem is different. The framework of the N.J.C.S.S. gives them recognition and a degree of organisational security at national level but little incentive to organise effectively on the ground.[51] As 'front loaded' organisations, conflict at the level of the N.J.C.S.S. can only be met with a degree of 'sabre rattling'.[52] The ability of the employees' representatives to make recognisably substantial gains is therefore weak and the probability of continued worker scepticism on the effectiveness of collection organisation, strong. Added to this are the possible effects, in the absence of positive union action, of the increased feminisation of the occupation. The historical evidence, however, is sufficient to warn against the dismissal of the future potential for organisation, and other activities of the Levy Board have served to undermine aspects of the employment relationship, notably the gift relationship, removing some of the arbitrary power of employers and some conditions unfavourable for the development of collective strategies.

This chapter has shown that the reactions of the workforce to collective organisation cannot be encapsulated in a stereotypical formula. In the face of the economic power and considerable hostility to collectivism of the employers, it is not surprising that worker reactions to unionism and collectivism have been and remain ambivalent. Nevertheless, the potential inherent in that ambivalence led to events which effectively created procedural norms from which the employers in particular, will find it difficult to retreat. This represents one further instance of the traditionally

veiled world of racing being exposed to the gaze of public institutions and pressured towards prevailing norms of economic conduct.

The question may be asked, however, how it is that some conditions for collective bargaining in an economically marginal activity have come to depend on the directive intervention of a statutory body; how it is that a government sponsored organisation has become so implicated in the mundane politics of a practice which for generations has had what might generously be described as a dubious status in society; and how, indeed, this was established given the traditional resistance in racing culture to outside interference? It is to these questions and the general issue of the relationship between the state and the institution of horse-racing that attention is turned in the next chapter; in fact bringing the discussion full circle as the role of the state provides an important bridge in the interface between racing and its external environment.

Notes and References

1. Davis (1979) for example suggests that media influences are greater where events are not directly experienced.

2. A different series of questions was put to members and non-members though in retrospect some items would have been equally relevant to both, especially regarding industrial action, see note 5.

3. As the interviews progressed this item was introduced informally into the discussion with non-members though responses were obviously not coded.

4. The National Joint Council for Stable Staffs was formed in 1976. A more detailed discussion of this and the T. & G. and S.L.A. appears later.

5. Marked increases in membership were reported as a response to these initiatives which included national advertisements in the Sporting Life.

6. The hearings were held at the Industrial Tribunal Office, Bury St. Edmunds.

7. Of the twelve members, five said they would consider strike action, four would not and the other three 'did not know'.

8. An earlier warning shot was fired by the legendary strike at Vauxhall following the 'Affluent Worker' research though as Goldthorpe later argued, the authors' remarks on industrial relations were often misinterpreted. (Goldthorpe et al, 1969).

9. Newby (1977a, p. 262) notes a similar pattern among farmworkers.

10. Other studies in various ways have recorded this finding, for example, Nichols and Armstrong (1976), Goldthorpe et al (1969), Davis (1979), Curran (1981). In terms of concrete issues and problems, however, attachment to union organisation tends to be much stronger, as these authors also show.

11. The Rothschild Commission (1978) proposed the establishment of a British Horse-racing Authority for the supervision of the industry, comprising representatives of major interest groups including labour.

12. Perhaps most famously the 'Affluent Worker' studies.

13. The historical account relies on a reading of Trade Union records, and correspondence and press material. The principal sources were minutes and records of the relevant trade groups in the union. Individual references are only given for quotations and specific points.

14. G.E.C. Minutes, June 1934.

15. The winding up of the section was in any event scarcely a realistic possibility while Joseph Beard remained national secretary of the group. Beard was a living link with the Workers Union of which he was a founder member. Newby (1977a) interestingly suggests that the

Workers Union adopted a rather mercenary attitude towards the farmworkers in any case.

16. The Congress Agreement had carved up legitimate organising areas for the T. & G. and the N.U.A.W.

17. General Secretary's report for the 1st Quarter, G.E.C. Minutes 1934.

18. General Secretary's report, G.E.C. Minutes May 1936.

19. Beard retired at the end of 1936 breaking one of the strong formal links with the Workers Union. It was recommended that T. Hodgson (also a former though junior member of the W.U.) secretary of the Flour and Allied Trades group should have his duties extended to cover the Agricultural Trade Group. The Lorry Drivers' Special, a propaganda pamphlet had proved very successful in a recruitment drive.

20. Bevin remarked for example that 'The farmworkers, however, are so self-centred that I doubt very much a general union is ever going to do much with them and while I suggest we see the end of the current campaign, if it does not bear fruit then with things as prosperous as they are I think we will have to look at the position afresh.' Bevin was also dismayed at the apparent rise of the rival N.U.A.W. as a quasi-general union. G.E.C. Minutes August 1937.

21. The road worker was to provide the kernal of rural recruitment.

22. The Transport union, before the democratising attempts of the early 1970's, was well known for its autocratic leadership and 'oligarchic' organisation.

23. National Agricultural Group Minutes 71, 1937. Quarterly Report to G.E.C. 1937.

24. This became known as the Newmarket Agreement and established a minimum wage of 48/- per week and conceded one Sundary evening in three free of stable duties.

25. Hence strike pay was distributed.

26. Press reports quoted in The Record in June 1938.

27. Union membership in the group as a whole apparently remained stable during the war which as in many other industries proved a boon to union membership.

28. Even 'interested' reports failed to put the improvement in density to beyond 60%. G.E.C. Minutes 1950.

29. The aim was to establish the location of all racing stables in the areas of the union's jurisdiction to pave the way for a struggle for national negotiation machinery.

30. Some members of the training community did nevertheless act as informal 'market' leaders, notably Captain C. Elsey.

31. An argument heard frequently during the 1975 dispute and around the

formation of the S.L.A.

32. Tom Healy, Secretary to the Agricultural Group and much involved with the stable lads explicitly stated his misgivings on this issue after becoming secretary of the new group. However, the issue seems to have quickly evaporated. Food, Drink, Tobacco Industries Group Minutes 1970.

33. As it normally was in much of British manufacturing industry for example.

34. Payment for leading a horse, racing at Newmarket, from the stables in the town to the racecourse.

35. The 'usual channel' as it was frequently called. The Earls of Derby have long been a celebrated racing family, prominent members of the Jockey Club and owners of the famous Stanley House Stables. It would be difficult to exaggerate the prestige and influence of the 17th Earl at that time. c.c. C. Silver (1971).

36. Member of the Jockey Club, prominent owner-breeder, de Trafford was scarcely less of a racing personage than Derby.

37. Memorandum of Agreement 4.2.46. The agreement was to run 'until such time as the independent chairman considers a case for revision is justified.'

38. This move on the part of the employers coincided with a change of secretary to the Agricultural Group, possibly not an innocent conjecture.

39. Classic examples are provided by E. Hobsbawm and G. Rude (1969), R. Groves (1949).

40. Industrial Disputes Tribunal Reports, July, August 1958.

41. This account is based on national and local newspaper reports and union records.

42. The Group Secretary, Healy was, however, given a very 'rough ride' (by the Newmarket members).

43. See for example the discussion by Eaton (1976).

44. A number of reported disputes implicitly illustrate this point, Beynon (1973), Lane and Roberts (1971), Batstone et al (1978), Friedmann and Meredeem (1980).

45. Mortimer was at the time of the strike the racing correspondent of the Sunday Times.

46. This figure is in fact incorrect and should be £4,47 per week.

47. The '1,000 Guineas' run over a mile at Newmarket for fillies only.

48. A process well described by Newby (1975).

49. The discussion of betting in Chapter Seven should dispel any

plausibility which Eaton's argument may have on the question of 'inside information'.

50. It seems, for example, that outstanding debts were cleared, bonuses and other inducements offered to ignore the strike call together with threats of eviction from tied property and so on.

51. A parallel may be drawn here with the increasing use of 'check-off' agreements in British industry in the 1970's and the, paradoxically, debilitating effect on shop floor organisation in many cases. (Nichols and Beynon, 1977; W. Brown et al, 1981).

52. This in fact was the pattern during 'sticky' negotiations in 1982 and took the form of a more skilful use of the trade media to advance the employees' case.

CHAPTER NINE

CONTROL, ADMINISTRATION AND THE STATE

Introduction

In serious discussions of horse-racing it is customary to accord a central place to the controlling influence of the Jockey Club. There are good reasons for this. In addition to its status as perhaps the first example of an authoritative controlling body in modern sport, it also possesses a number of intrinsically interesting sociological characteristics. More attention will be given to these as the discussion proceeds. However, in the past two decades it has become increasingly apparent that important changes have affected power relations at the controlling core of the industry. In a nutshell, such changes have been a consequence of increased state involvement in racing since the early 1960's in the form of the statutory Horserace Betting Levy Board. The control of racing cannot now therefore be discussed adequately in terms of an exclusive focus on the traditionalist oligarchy of the Jockey Club. Instead it must be located in a network of political relationships which stretch beyong the overt parameters of racing into the state and to the processes of accumulation in commercial bookmaking. The aim of this chapter will be to investigate this complex web of relationships and to draw some conclusions on the implications of the process outlined for the broader significance of horse-racing as a social institution.

It should be clear from this overview, however, that the discussion involves both a substantive or policy context and a theoretical context, specifically concerning the question of the state. It will be useful first then to outline briefly these contexts in turn, beginning with a consideration of

the substantive context and particularly with the deliberations of the Royal Commission on Gambling (1978). While this will anticipate some of the later discussion it will indicate the nature of the terrain to be covered.

The Substantive Context - The Royal Commission on Gambling 1978

In July 1978 the Royal Commision on Gambling, established in 1975, under the chairmanship of Lord Rothschild, finally published its report. Such enquiries have had a long career in the history of public administration in Britain, reappearing in one form or another periodically since the early nineteenth century. These investigations were generally set up in response to particular exigencies of social control, reflecting what is now a more general, well-worn means of diffusing sensitive issues. This pattern, however, is also symbolic of the profound cultural ambivalence towards gambling in this country discussed in Chapter Three, and for which these investigations may be seen as serving as a cathartic purge. Frequently, such reports have displayed some shrewd analysis. Equally they have often been characterised by class prejudice and the short-sightedness and absurd administrative and regulatory prescriptions to which this often leads. It remains to be seen whether the latest contribution, a thorough and wide-ranging study, will escape from the historical pattern and the weaknesses of its predecessors.

There is, however, at least one respect in which the Rothschild Commission represents a departure from previous investigations of this nature. This is the extent to which it concerned itself with the internal organisation of one of the principal activities involved in the gambling matrix, namely horse-racing. Very little attention was given, for example, to the organisation and finances of racing by the 1949 Royal Commission. However, such was the weight and extent of the racing lobby in presenting evidence to the Rothschild Commission, that it felt obliged to consider these

issues more deeply.[1] In fact the language of the report makes it clear that coping with the factions, contradictions, self-interest and positional somersaults of the racing 'fraternity' was an exasperating experience for the members of the Commission. In this sense the attention given to racing was profoundly symbolic as it effectively consecrated what, in time, may come to be seen as the watershed over which racing passed in the previous decade and a half. This was a period of frenetic political activity in the industry which witnessed the proliferation of interest groups and more pronounced interest group activity[2] and a plague of official and quasi-official reports on the state of various aspects of the industry.[3]

In its analysis the Commission pointed to the inextricable link between organisation and finance for the industry, and argued that the case for more finance could not be separated from the appropriateness of current organisational arrangements. Of these the Commission was extremely critical. It noted the conflictful history of relations between the Jockey Club and the Levy Board, the frequent criticisms of lack of representativeness levelled at the Jockey Club and the lack of a formal relationship between the Levy Board and the racing industry. The Commission was also critical of, though resigned to, the principle of the hypothecation of betting revenues for the benefit of racing. It was also critical of the arrangements for fixing the levy for such purposes which involved the Levy Board in a conflictful and contradictory role. As far as the Commission could see, the case for more finance had been 'put too high' (p. 98) and the exclusive emphasis on prize money levels as a means of maintaining the quality of racing was misguided. On the whole the industry could be described as 'overweight'.

Nineteen recommendations were directed at racing, the majority

concerning organisation and finance. Most importantly, it proposed that both the Jockey Club and the Levy Board, to use a racing term, be 'cut' or at least have their strategic roles diluted. An easy option would have been to recommend the amalgamation of the two bodies but for the purpose of public accountability, the questions of the raising the levy and its spending could not be resolved by the potential beneficiaries alone. Equally, the Commission argued that the Levy Board should not be concerned with detailed organisation of racing. Hence it should lose its obligation to control the detailed spending of the levy, retaining only its functions of fixing the levy and additionally, approving in general terms, the spending plans.

In parallel with this proposal it was recommended that the authority of the Jockey Club be restricted to that over racing discipline and licensing. Its wider economic, organisational and strategic planning functions were to be transferred to a new institution, a British Horse-racing Authority (B.H.A.) comprising a maximum of twelve representatives of major different interests in the industry.[4] The B.H.A. was to constitute the supreme administrative and legislative authority for British racing and would also take over a number of Levy Board subsidiaries and eventually all British racecourses. The B.H.A. was to be a non-statutory body. However, were the racing world not able to agree a constitution for such a body within six months, a statutory body would have to be created. Such a reform was seen to be necessary lest the control of racing passed into the clutches of the Levy Board, a direction in which it is suggested ot have been moving inexorably in recent years. Under the proposed arrangements the Levy Board would be responsible only for fixing the levy and casting a watchful eye over the B.H.A.'s annual buget. The levy, thus retained as a means of external finance, would be fixed authoritatively by the Board without reference to the contributing bookmakers.[5]

Though radical in some respects, the recommendations failed to appreciate the politics of the situation and were rapidly outmanoeuvred by racing interests. It was unrealistic to expect the Jockey Club to relinquish control to this extent or as was intended, to lead the search for a constitution for the B.H.A. Even were this to transpire it was unlikely that the legislature would be persuaded to discharge such revenue dispensing functions to a non-statutory body and even more unlikely, following a failure to agree on the B.H.A., that yet another statutory organisation would be set up to run parallel with the Levy Board. It was not surprising that the Jockey Club received the report with muted enthusiasm as it provided a recipe for inertia.[6] In the event an Horserace Advisory Council was established in 1979 with Levy Board funds and the blessing of the Home Secretary. Superficially this represented an organisational response to the Royal Commission but was one which effectively left the established power centres in tact. The H.A.C. in effect provides a higher level of representation but not management.

What is remarkable about this intervention is not simply the content or recommendations of the report, germane as they are to racing politics but that such a body as a Royal Commission should have been constrained to consider the issues at such length. This situation can only be appreciated by an analysis of the emergent politics of the previous decade or so and in this of the role of the state.

Theoretical Context - The Problem of the State

It is a commonplace that in the 1970's the social sciences were notable for the re-discovery of the 'state'. It is beyong the scope of this thesis to engage in an extensive analysis of the results of this 'discovery'. However,

the strategic importance of the state in recent sociological debate and more particularly in the area under discussion, make preliminary comments on the subject necessary.

The fact of increased state intervention has been taken up by a number of perspectives. Liberal pluralists have made some interesting, if narrow, observations on the organisational limitations of the state and consequent dangers to legitimacy of ineffective state intervention (Rose, 1980).[7] As Panitch (1980) notes, there has also been a minor growth industry in discussions of 'corporatism', as a political form. There is little doubt, however, that most of the running in the debate on the state has been made by Marxian accounts, as the issue became recognised as a crucial problem for Marxist theory (Crouch, 1979).

These latter discussions quickly reached the extremes of abstractionism particularly in the hands of the neo-structuralists[8] with the consequent danger that scepticism would divert attention from the real problems of theorising the State and state action.[9] Nevertheless, there are few discussions in this tradition which have avoided the now familiar charges of teleology and 'functionalism' (Clarke, 1977), 'economism' (Hirst, 1977) or empirical implausibility. Indeed, as has been argued in another context, the neo-structuralist assumptions of this genre tend to lead to a failure to look at the empirical mechanisms involved (Scase and Goffee, 1982). The Marxist tradition as Jessop (1977) shows, is also rather heterogeneous - six major variations were found even in the classical texts and these differences are also to some extent reflected in contemporary neo-Marxist perspectives. However, at the risk of some oversimplication, these tend to resolve into two broad categories, instrumental theories and neo-structuralist theories. A convenient motif for this dichotomy may be found in the respective

distinction between the notion of 'the state in capitalist society' and 'the capitalist state' (Offe, 1974). The former, expressed most obviously in the work of Miliband (1969), suggests the instrumentalist view that the state acts in the interest of capital for reasons of external manipulation and which are in principle essentially contingent. The notion of the 'capitalist state', however, suggests that the state operates in the broad interests of capital because of necessary and structural rather than contingent reasons. The class instrumental theory is now regarded as somewhat naive as it is seen to imply a more or less sophisticated conspiracy theory of the state. However, while few writers openly espouse the unqualified idea of the 'state as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie', it is, as Hirst (1977) argues, at least questionable whether 'instrumentalism' does not persist in more disguised forms. Nevertheless, what is common to these approaches as Jessop (1977) argues, is a view of the state couched in terms of a theory of social reproduction. The emphasis tends to be on functional moments of the state in the reproduction of capital, labour power, capitalist hegemony and relations of production.

In order to maintain such processes effectively, however, it is assumed that the state must distance itself from empirical capitalist interests both from the point of view of legitimacy and because, for example, those interests may be in conflict over certain issues or otherwise be incapable of generating a coherent view or strategy. The state, in other words, must achieve a degree of independence from capital, or 'relative autonomy'[10], though this is not to say that capital will not in fact attempt to influence state policy. However, in the context of what are widely assumed to be increasingly severe pressures on accumulation, the state may be seen as organising the long term interests of capital, sustaining relationships and conditions presupposed by capitalist society as a whole. However, the problem

of the processes by which functional imperatives are translated into policy and trasmitted into the everyday consciousness and strategies of higher state functionaries, is not one that particularly concerns writers in this genre. The functional or relational emphasis on the state also tends to a view of the state as an homogenous unity and leads to neglect of the interconnections between, for example, levels of state operation, different state functions, modes of intervention and modes of interest representation. This tradition, in fact, is particularly dismissive of considerations of interest mediation as policy is assumed to be structured by production relations (Dunleavy, 1981).

The more analysis moves away from generalities the more problematic this stance becomes. It is not very helpful, for example, to a consideration of activities in the backwaters of the state, such as, in the present case, in relation to the Levy Board.[11] There are, of course, exceptions to this limitation and a number of writers in the neo-Marxist tradition have been concerned with real interventions and have found it necessary to make more refined concepts and distinctions.[12] The work of Claus Offe (1974, 1975a, 1975b, 1975c, 1976) is particularly interesting in this context and some use can be made of it in the analysis of the Levy Board. Even Offe's work, however, is highly schematic and some of his observations are inconsistent with events in the 1980's.

Briefly, Offe shares the notion of the 'capitalist state' which derives its nature as such because the internal mechanisms of the state display a class specific selectivity which finally guarantees the formulation and implementation of the 'collective capitalist interest' (1974). A number of structural features of the state demonstrate its necessary relation with the accumulation process. Offe is among an increasing number of writers who

note that the power of the state is to some extent dependent on the material resources generated by the accumulation process and therefore on the continuing stability of that process.[13] The interest of the state (and its functionaries) in its own stability coincides with the necessity to maintain favourable conditions for accumulation - a feature which Offe argues is a heavy constraint on policy formation. As the state is 'excluded' from organising production according to its own criteria but also 'dependent', it has an interest in, indeed a mandate for, the maintenance of favourable conditions of accumulation, a process which takes place in different ways at different levels of the economy. Moreover, it is suggested that the requirements of stability in accumulation may well be incorporated in policies whose explicit aims are of a quite different order (1975b). In this analysis attention is therefore also implictly drawn to the possible coincidence of fiscal imperatives and those of accumulation.

In the context of the discussion of the changing nature of state intervention in advanced capitalism Offe provides a useful distinction between 'politics' and 'managerialism' as methods of policy making. Competitive politics as such a method, is best suited to 'allocative' state functions - that is where:

> "the state creates and maintains the conditions of accumulation by measures that require simply the allocation of resources ... which are already under the control of the state." (1975b, pp. 128).

Resources are available for distribution and are subject to interest competition. Politics is the method of policy making appropriate to this form of intervention which corresponds to 'facilitative' and 'supportive' interventions characteristic of earlier periods of liberal capitalism, though they still persist. This form is, however, inappropriate to the 'productive

policies' characteristic of state intervention in contemporary capitalism. Here the wherewithal for intervention may not already be available, and such policies are oriented to monitoring accumulation at a more general level. Of increasing importance they are better served by 'managerialist' decision-making, that is authoritative, strategic, decision-making independent of the claims of specific interests, generated within the state apparatus. In this neo-Marxist schema then, politics are not altogether irrelevant vis-a-vis policy formation and there are connections between different types of policy and methods of generating policy. It will be evident that distinctions of this order are essential in analysing the nature of state intervention in racing.

It should be said, however, that Offe is rather cautious about the possibility of the state successfully accomplishing 'managerialist' interventions (1975b). A number of processes effectively render the state unable to perform effectively the functions required of it, wherein lies a major contradiction of the capitalist state.[14] However, one factor not considered in Offe's rather functionalist schema is the problem that managerialist policies are habitually mediated and confronted by the residues of previous policies and organisational layers and the interests and expectations which have built up around them over time. Added to this is the consideration that such interests are often constituted by influential but essentially non-capitalist groups which regard their position as independent of dominant groups and the state, above politics and so on. As such they are prone to resist initiatives which threaten their assumed independence or jurisdiction over their sanctified area, even where other substantial benefits may accrue. Obvious examples here are the traditional professions. In some sense, such interests overlap with Gramsci's notion of 'traditional intellectuals' a category confronting a new economic structure which represents an:

"historical continuity uninterrupted even by the most complicated and radical changes in political and social forms." (1971, p. 7).

An attribution of any notion of 'intellectual' to the racing hierarchy is liable to be regarded somewhat dubiously, but it will be evident that the situation outlined above is strongly echoed in the confrontation between the Levy Board and the Jockey Club. As the following sections will show, the Jockey Club, an organisational embodiment of such an 'historical continuity', symbolically (at least) linked to the landed aristocracy, had in its previous dealings and organisational relations with government, cultivated an expectation of state support without interference. This proved an important stumbling block for intervention as it developed after 1960 and is discussed in some detail.

The mainstream of debate on the state has concerned primarily economic intervention, industrial relations, the extended reproduction of labour power in the 'urban' matrix and so on. While there has been some pioneering work on the political economy of sport and the role of state sponsored sports enterprises for social and economic integration[15], on the whole, there has been very little attention given to the relationship between the state, sport and sporting industries, even among sports sociologists. While this is largely unremarkable, it does seem a strange omission given the increasingly overt' interference' of politics in sport so frequently bemoaned by sports people and sports administrators.

The following discussion of an activity in which 'politics' is ingrained should redress the balance somewhat and in particular will illustrate some consequences of state intervention on the internal environment of sport, albeit in this instance, a commercialised spectator sport. The remainder of the discussion will examine the nature of the Jockey Club; the creation and

role of the Levy Board; the relationship between the Board and bookmaking capital; and between the Board, the Jockey Club and racing. First, however, with the emphasis primarily on the content of policy, it will be instructive to view the historical links between government and racing as cumulatively these provided mediating conditions for the interventions of the 1960's and 1970's.

The Historical Context

In varying degrees, thoroughbred horse-racing has been an object of occasional governmental concern for at least two centuries. For example, an early connection is demonstrated by the interest of the military in racing in the late eighteenth century. While Britain's external defence and the economic expansion of this era depended on her stature as a naval power, the importance of bloodstock to other military activities was explicitly recognised. Racing, which provded a testing ground and an incentive for the calculative breeding of the light horse and thus a medium for the development of the whole breed, was consequently recognised as an important means for the maintenance and improvement of bloodstock. Hence special races in the form of King's and Queen's Plates which embodied the values of strength and stamina required by the military, were sponsored by the government until 1888 (Vamplew, 1976). By mid-century, however, the trend of commercialisation of racing was well-entrenched and had already pressured the bloodstock industry to breed for speed and precociousness leading to the demise of the long distance, 'weight-carrying' event.

Nevertheless, and despite the patently limited days of the cavalry, the government in 1916 acquired the property of a private thoroughbred breeder to enhance the army's light horse stock. This then formed the basis of the National Stud (Rickman, 1958). From the beginning, however, the stud

continued to be oriented to the racing industry and it appears that by the mid-1920's not even lip service was paid to the army connection. In its place, the importance of the stud to the bloodstock industry and thus to external trade, became the major rationalising symbol. The National Stud has continued to operate as a service to the bloodstock industry moving to the stewardship of the Levy Board in 1963. Since that time it appears increasingly to have adopted the role of socialising the costs of stallion purchases and nominations for British breeders as the value of syndicated stallions has escalated beyond the financial resources of all but a few of the most successful commercial breeders. In 1975, for example, the National Study purchased a three-quarter share in the Derby winner Grundy, re-syndicating the stallion to nineteen British breeders for £25,000 each,[16] a price well below that likely to have existed in the open market even assuming that the animal had not been exported. In 1976, six stallions stood at the stud including three English Derby winners and a winner of the Prix de L'Arc de Triomph, which otherwise may have been well out of the reach of all but a few British breeders. While the National Stud constitutes a minor fragment of the breeding industry its activities have undoubtedly expanded since 1963, the number of mares being covered for example, more than doubling.[17]

Problems of social control and especially the social control of gambling, as was shown in Chapter Three, has also implicated the state in racing because of the symbiotic relationship between racing and betting. On the surface at least, the class character and general direction of gambling legislation offered some advantages to racing and reinforced the authority of the Jockey Club insofar as the Jockey Club approved courses provided virtually the only practicable medium for legitimate cash betting open to the working class, that is, until the advent of commercialised greyhound racing in the 1920's.

However, it was seen that elaborate structures of working class betting were developed to counter these restrictions. It is also possible to overestimate the attractions of the racecourses for specifically betting purposes. Vamplew (1976) argues, for example, that despite the restricted access for the working man, there was a genuine interest in racing as a mass spectator sport.

From time to time, the attempts to criminalise some aspects of gambling have come too close for comfort for the racing authorities which, as a result, have not been slow to engage in fairly explicit interest group politics, using their influence with those of similar social origins in positions of power, to achieve policy concessions. Dixon (1980) shows, for example, that the agitation of the N.A.G.L. in the 1890's initially against all gambling, looked set to threaten the legitimacy of racing itself. In 1897, an action sponsored by the League was temporarily successful in exploiting the ambiguity of earlier legislation and in outlawing betting on the racecourse. The Jockey Club attempted to have the law altered in Parliament, but Dixon argues, the issue was too sensitive and was thus resolved in the courts with the initial decision being overruled in the Lords through judgement on a 'collusive' civil action (Mckibbin, 1979).[18] This was, according to Dixon, a setback from which the N.A.G.L. never recovered and it was then forced to focus its attention exclusively on working class gambling. The willingness, when it suited, to attempt to wield influence at the highest levels of representation in government has since been a feature of the Jockey Club and this was also to figure in the renewed politics of de-criminalisation of betting in the 1950's.

A third, and in the long run more important, area of government involvement with racing concerns the potential of racing as a source or generator of tax revenues. This was even the case in the late eighteenth

century. Taxes were levied on racehorses for ninety years from 1784 (Hood, 1976) and on racing establishments until 1856, although their contribution to total revenue was small. Vamplew (1976) suggests the yield from the tax on raceshorses, for example, to have been 8,700 guineas in 1873. Potential revenues from taxing horserace betting, however, were naturally likely to have been of a quite different order. The feasibility of taxing betting was first formally considered by the Select Committee on Betting Duty, 1923. The Committee's brief, curtailed report was broadly in favour of such a step and the remainder of the draft report, which was not considered because of the dissolution of Parliament, indicated, realistically, that this would have to be attendant upon changes in the control of off-course cash betting.

In the event there appeared little support for a proposal which would stir up considerable controversy. Nevertheless, Churchill was still attracted to the idea when searching around for additional sources of revenue during his Chancellorship in the mid-1920's (Hood, 1970). In spite of the predicted difficulties and without heeding the full implications of the Select Committee report on the question of legalisation of cash betting, a Betting Tax was introduced in 1926. The duty legislation had faced opposition from a host of improbable bed-fellows: arguments purporting moral ruin went hand in hand with those predicting disaster for both the bookmaking and racing industries (Lambie, 1978). As Hood (1976) shows, the tax was an administrative failure and in practice eventually led to the undignified spectacle of attempts by Customs and Excise to tax illegal cash betting. However, the most significant result of this complex fiscal episode from the point of view of racing was that it effectively gave birth to the 'Tote' and, through this, established a precedent for hypothecated revenues for racing.

The official version of the creation of the Tote offered by the Select

Committee on Nationalised Industries (1976), for example, suggests that the intention of Parliament in setting up the Racecourse Betting Control Board (R.B.C.B.) under whose auspices tote betting was to be managed, was to provide an alternative form of betting to the bookmaker and to create a source of revenue for the improvement of horse breeding and racing. Official statements, of course, are notorious for the way in which they mask the more complex processes of policy formation and this example is no exception. The creation of the Tote, in fact, can be and requires to be, explained entirely in terms of 'politics' in the sense of the term outlined by Offe (1975b), in the context of the opportunities wrought by the betting duty legislation of 1926.

The Jockey Club was initially opposed to the tax because of the possible damage to racecourse attendances (Hood, 1970). Once it was clear that the tax was to become a reality, however, the 'Turf' establishment saw, if with characteristic belatedness, the opportunity for exploiting the argument that the activity which generated the overwhelming proportion of the duty should be given a share of the pickings. According to Hood (1970), however, the Treasury at this time was opposed to any form of direct hypothecation. If the lobby was to be successful another means of channelling some of the proceeds of betting into racing had to be found. Possibly the only politically and organisationally feasible alternative at the time was statutory provision for the setting up of an on-course Totalisator for which there were at least some precedents overseas.

In fact, Totalisator or Pari Mutual, or more simply 'pool betting'[19] had been a well-known phenomenon for half a century before being legally established in Britain in 1928. The French, then as at present a major reference point for the British racing world, could boast an official Pari

Mutual system as early as 1872. A few dubious entrepreneurs had cavorted with pool betting schemes in England towards the end of the century though their own greed and unusually efficient police suppression, rendered them short-lived initiatives (Vamplew, 1976).

Vamplew argues that by the turn of the century the idea of a Pari Mutual system increasingly came to be mooted by some of the aristocratic owner/breeders of the racing establishment who invoked the tantalising argument that official totalisators would help to 're-cycle' money disappearing from racing into bookmakers' satchels thus giving the sport a much needed fillip.[20] Somewhat ingenuously, in 1916 in the midst of the First World War when racing faced many restrictions, some notable racing figures lobbied the Jockey Club with a view to its approaching the government to legalise a Tote. Not even the Jockey Club, however, could fail to recognise the tactlessness of such a proposal which came to nothing (Rickman, 1950). Similar arguments were again mustered in the early 1920's once racing picked up again after the war. Hence the principle of a Totalisator had been well canvassed by the time of the duty legislation.

In its wake, the Turf authorities under the leadership of the newly appointed senior-steward, Lord Hamilton of Dalzell, set up a committee to investigate 'means by which betting may be best made to contribute to the maintenance of the sport'[21]. The implicit purpose of the committee was to produce a case for an official Totalisator in Britain and in this it duly obliged. Such was the message presented to Churchill in late 1927. It had also been made clear by him that although the government could not sponsor the appropriate bill, facilities would be made available for the introduction of a Private Member's Bill (Mortimer, 1979). Such magnanimity on Churchill's part was evidently conditioned by the need for continued Jockey

Club co-operation regarding the implementation of the tax and the influence of the Jockey Club notables in Conservative Party central office (Hood, 1970).

The original bill was virtually drafted by the Jockey Club and the privilege of introducing it fell to an acquaintenace of Dalzell, Sir Ralph Glyn. There was, however, considerable opposition to the proposals from the usual quarters, including the unholy alliance of bookmakers and churches who had also opposed the duty legislation two years earlier. Nevertheless, and though much amended, the bill reached the statute book in 1928 as the Racecourse Betting Act.

The introduction of the Tote then is clearly located in the politics of realising the betting duty. It might also be speculated that the potential of the Tote as a convenient and more easily controlled source of revenue may have aided its appearance, especially in the face of emerging difficulties of administering the betting tax. Hood (1976) argues, however, that the Customs and Excise were rather pessimistic about the potential of the Tote in this respect and it would therefore be a mistake to exaggerate the perceived fiscal potential of the Tote at this time.

However, the Racecourse Betting Control Board (R.B.C.B.), a statutory body, was given the brief of overseeing the establishment of pool betting facilities on approved racecourses, that is those licensed by the Jockey Club. In fact, the Board took the initiative in setting up such facilties itself though it had been given no resources of its own to do so. Setting a pattern which was to re-appear thirty years later in the form of the Levy Board, the R.B.C.B. was also charged with allocatory functions vis-a-vis racing with the surplus revenues it generated. Surplus funds were to be directed to the

improvement of horse breeding and racing.

In line with the constitution of many subsequent 'quangos', the R.B.C.B. comprised representatives of the interested parties and a minority of government appointed 'independents'. The first chairman in fact was an ex-colonial railway administrator. It seems clear, however, that from the beginning the Board and its allocatory functions were dominated by the Jockey Club and National Hunt Committee members.[22] This represented a de facto realisation of the original provisions of the Tote bill which had intended to place the Jockey Club in charge of the Tote (Mortimer, 1979). Hence, in practice, the R.B.C.B. appears to have operated as little more than a satellite of the Jockey Club. This situation had quite important ramifications for the relations between the Jockey Club and the Levy Board some forty or so years later.

The initial financial and organisational problems of the Tote were considerable. It had been forced to borrow initial capital, incurring debts which were not redeemed until 1950. The R.B.C.B. itself underestimated the logistical and organisational problems of matching a pool betting system to the peculiarities of British racing, especially in its de-centralised format. While it is said to have proved popular with small backers,[23] five years elapsed before it made a paltry surplus. Ironically, the betting duty legislation had been repealed by the time the Tote was able to make any real contributions to revenue. Hence while it might be speculated that the Tote emerged out of the interconnection of fiscal politics and private interests, it actually made no contribution to Treasury coffers in its original form.

The importance of this consideration of the Tote is that the

circumstances of its birth and the political precedents it presented, were broadly re-enacted in the proto-history of the Horserace Betting Levy Board. A detailed history of the Tote at this juncture would therefore be superfluous. However, a number of obvservations concerning the chequered career of the Tote may be made which will serve to contexualise later discussion.

First, the financial contribution which the Tote made to racing in its original role was no doubt gratefully received, but marginal. In the first thirty-two years of its existence, that is until it was reconstituted as the Horserace Totalisator Board, the Tote contributed some £8.6 million to racing.[24] This situation reflected the financial weakness of the Tote in its original form which compared with its French counterpart, for example, suffered from the disadvantage of having no on-course betting monopoly. Means were indirectly made available to tap the off-course credit market, but again the business was marginal.[25]

Secondly, the Betting Levy Act of 1961 significantly changed the functions and constitution of the Tote and heralded a new phase of its development. The new legislation effectively removed the Tote from the immediate clutch of vested interests and relieved it of its direct allocatory functions for racing. However, the following decade was almost disastrous for the Tote because it could not, for legal reasons, compete effectively in the off-course cash betting market. Not until after the Horserace Totalisator and Betty Levy Act of 1972 which allowed the Tote to undertake most other bookmaking operations, did its fortunes begin to revive. Since that time then and under the aggressive chairmanship of Woodrow Wyatt, the organisation appears to have adopted the operational goal of effective competition with bookmakers. This expansionary strategy, however,

considerably irritated the bookmaking trade which has a long history of antagonism to the Tote. Symptomatic of the relationship between the two interests was the submission of the Tote to the Royal Commission (1978) which argued for a betting monopoly operated by the Tote leading eventually to the elimination of bookmakers altogether. Rather predictably the large bookmakers refused to entertain the Tote's subsequent application to join their trade organisation B.O.L.A. in 1977. Further fuel was added to the fire when the Tote's dubious experiments with dividends were exposed and found to be illegal. This episode from which the Tote escaped with minor bruising was also indicative of the later 'competitive' strategy.[26]

The relationship between the racing world and the Tote now seems rather ambivalent. As a new locus of power emerged in the form of the Levy Board and the Tote's contribution to racing relative bookmakers and the Levy Board dwindled, the racing establishment has adopted a lukewarm relationship with the Tote. As the Churches Council on Gambling noted (1972), this traditional source of support for the Tote was noticeably reticent when the 1972 legislation was under scrutiny.

Notwithstanding the details of its later history, the importance of the creation of the Tote was that: (a) it set a precedent for hypothecated revenues for racing; (b) it embodied a framework of interest dealing which the racing lobby was to repeat in negotiations with government on the betting legislation some thirty years later. In Offe's terms (1975b) it demonstrated that 'politics' was an effective method of policy formation - at least as far as racing interests were concerned.

Whatever the significance of these early brushes of the state with racing they appear to have had little strategic effect on its internal organisation

and practice. In particular, few inroads were made into the controlling hegemony of the Jockey Club over racing. Hence it is to the role of this body that we now turn before proceeding with the analysis of the role of the Levy Board.

The Jockey Club

A good deal of ink has been spilt in discussions of what is commonly seen as the peculiar nature of the Jockey Club. The racing literature abounds with terms such as 'autocracy', 'exclusive', 'august', 'absolutism', 'hereditary authority' and so on. It is also frequently seen as a "splendidly British institution" (Malcolm, 1970), "so utterly individual that it could only have happened in England" (Day, 1971). It is often seen as a relic of the 'old order' and whereas the democratic ideal has:

> "swept away much of the power, privilege and wealth of the old ruling class ... (it) ... has by-passed one of its bastions, the Jockey Club".
>
> (Rickman, 1951, p. 27)

A "citadel of entrenched privilege, blue blood and embattled prejudice" (Day, 1971), the Club is observed by still another writer to have:

> "exercised more power than any comparable association in any part of the world which has no statutory sanction and no legal privilege."
>
> (Parker, 1968, p. 19)

The same writer concludes his discussion with the following indictment of the Club which is not untypical of this genre of commentary:

> "While British racing remains in its present state they are still able to recapture, if only for a few hours on the racecourse - a little of the old feudal feeling they enjoyed before the upheaval that started in 1939. As self-selected, absolute rulers of a little world

> with virtual power of life and death over its inhabitants they can shore up their crumbling belief in the divine right of peers."
>
> (ibid., pp. 32-33)

These observations by racing commentators and others suggest, symptomatically, that the importance of the Jockey Club is that it has provided a graphic example of a traditional administration and specifically of a patrimonial bureaucracy. There is a good deal of truth in this but the contemporary character of the Jockey Club presents a more complex picture as aspects of patrimonialism and legal rational administration have become fused. So much, indeed, could be predicted from Weber's (1947) discussion where it is suggested that the continuity afforded by patrimonial administration provides a basis for development in the long term of legal rational bureaucracy though this is by no means automatic. Even allowing for departures in detail from Weber's ideal types, it can be argued that the organisation of the Jockey Club reflects this longer term transition. It can also be mantained that this curious organisational admixture embodies some of the conditions which have allowed the Jockey Club, with its taint of anachronism, to survive in its controlling capacity in the face of the wider social changes of the twentieth century. In this respect, of course, the path of the Jockey Club merely echoes the peculiarity of the British route of accommodation and adaptation. Particularly important for the Jockey Club in this process, however, was the arrangement whereby strategic and operational decision-making became differentiated very early on in the history of the Jockey Club administration. This allowed the Club to develop a degree of 'relative autonomy' from the day to day running of racing, from local interest and conflicts which otherwise may have been calculated to sully the disinterested aura which the Club has been at pains to cultivate, and to undermine its authority. The effective sub-contracting of operational administration to a subordinate organisation, namely the family firm of

Weatherby's also provided the space for hostility towards the Club to be displaced or at least diffused. In elaborating these points, however, it is most useful to begin by examining the extent to which historically the Jockey Club administration could be said to be broadly patrimonial.

Patrimonialism is the more developed form of domination based on traditional authority outlined by Weber. The notion of traditionalism has re-appeared in a number of guises in this thesis but all embody the notion of the legitmacy of authority based on the 'sanctity of order as it has been handed down'. Traditionalism may be said further to involve "the receptive affirmation of the legitimacy of established institutions and values and the rejection of innovations threatening the order they embody." (Jessop, 1974, p. 35). In Weber's scheme, of course, different legitimating beliefs, authority structures and different organisational forms or forms of administration, are closely associated. Of the three forms of traditionalist domination Weber distinguished, patrimonialism appears to be the most common empirically, though. of course, one is talking here of approximations to the ideal type. In fact, Weber never clearly outlined an ideal type of patrimonial authority or administration to rival that of the legal rational type and followers of Weber are not always consistent in their use of the terms. Some features of the patrimonial form are clear, however.

Patrimonial authority is characterised by a realm of free arbitrariness (Albrow, 1970) or a sphere of arbitrary free grace (Parsons, 1947) which, within the limits set by tradition, allow those in authority free reign. As Freund (1968) suggests, a basic characteristic of patrimonial authority is that all governmental authority and the corresponding economic rights, tend to be treated as privately appropriated economic advantages. While there are limits to this arbitrariness, it follows that there is no clear cut distinction between

the incumbent's authority and personal capacity, the individual has a total status rather than a particular 'office'. According to Parsons (1947) this also means that there is little distinction between the means of administration and personal property and the lack of individual status differentiation implies that kinship will be important and the hereditary principle, in particular, is always likely to develop in a system of traditional authority.

The relative stability of patrimonial authority is conducive to attempts to cultivate 'private administration' and a body of officials, the latter being intrinsic to the notion of patrimonial bureaucracy and the starting point for the development of rational forms of bureaucracy (Albrow, 1970).

Again, while there is no clear ideal type of patrimonial administration in Weber's work, it may be speculated that such a form would include the following elements, many of which find echoes in the history of the Jockey Club. First, recruitment is ascriptive and patrimonial in the sense that it is based on personal affiliation of some kind. Recruits are already related to the leaders by ties of kinship, traditional loyalty or other ties of dependence. Clearly social qualification rather than administrative ability constitutes the major criterion of selection. It follows also that there are no regular systems of appointment and promotion. The emergence, for example, of the family firm of Weatherby's as the secretariat of the Jockey Club from a position of 'Keeper of the Matchbook' and publishers of one of the early racing calendars, provides a case of officials recruited from among 'dependents'. More graphically, however, the Jockey Club itself has always been as it continues to be, a self-selecting and thus exclusive group. Entry is restricted to sponsored candidates of whom existing members will have social knowledge. New recruits are co-opted by the Jockey Club as and when it sees fit and its own curious procedure of election has donated the

term 'blackballing' to the language. From 1770 to 1968 the leadership of the Jockey Club was entrusted on a rolling basis to three 'stewards' who took it in turns to act as Senior Steward. However, this system was altered when expedience required.

According to Weber, patrimonial administrations exhibit secondly, no clear definitions of tasks or division of labour and in addition tend to be blind to ideas of competence and specialisation with officials receiving little or no specialised training. The nature of duties, tasks and privileges shifts according to the arbitrary inclination of the leadership, consistent with the principle of free arbitrariness. In effect, the leading personages adopt the position of dignitaries rather than officials, a situation which historically appears to have characterised the positions of the stewards of the Jockey Club. Often such positions were regarded as a right of members of certain noble families, an honour rather than a responsibility (Mortimer, 1979). However, when necessary, the stewards felt free to investigate areas of racing and adjudicate on them as they saw fit, in effect, ranging free. This is particularly true of the great 'Turf Reformers' of the nineteenth century but the principle of free grace also appears to have been the modus operandi of lesser incumbents of the position. In such a system as this, the competence of the leadership may vary greatly, and indeed the wit which has been expended questioning the competence of the stewards and of the Jockey Club as a whole, would fill a small volume. The 'three blind mice' is a favourite aphorism for describing the triumvirate and more recently the racing correspondent Clive Graham suggested that the form book be 'written in braille for the benefit of the stewards'! Justified or not, there is a strong tradition of dissent on the question of Jockey Club competence and particularly on its ability to keep pace with change (Black, 1891; Mortimer, 1958, 1979). It was not until 1968 that stewards' functions were defined and

re-ordered on a more rational basis. In that year, with the amalgamation with the National Hunt Committee, nine stewards were created (reduced to six in 1977) each with specialist responsibility and their own stewards' committee.

Third, patrimonial administration offers no statutory guarantees or regular salaries for officials. As Khan (1980) argues, the Jockey Club has generated considerable defensive mileage out of the claim that the stewards act voluntarily and are unpaid. It is also the case that the relationship between the Jockey Club and its secretariat was embodied in an informal gentleman's agreement until 1972 when Weatherby's finally requested formalisation of the arrangements through a renegotiable contract.

In such administrations fourth there is no separation between public and private spheres, between the personal interests of the administrator and the public interests attached to the position occupied. This also implied that the means of administration belonged to the official, "like the artisan who possessed the economic means of production, the prebendary possessed the means of administration." (Weber, 1970, p. 297). This feature is not altogether unambiguous when applied to the Jockey Club. Certainly there were cases in the nineteenth century, as with Admiral Rous, for example, who was senior steward from 1859 to 1875, where the position was to all intents and purposes 'personal property'. Historically also there have been some blatant examples of corruption involving some of the most respected figures in the Jockey Club. Generally, however, the position of steward was not regarded as one to be appropriated for personal gain. Equally, the position of steward did entail an all-encompassing status, bridging personal life and public function. In another respect though, the means of administration - at the operational level - did belong in a proprietoral sense

to the office holder, namely the Weatherby family which owned the General Stud Book, racing records and many administrative procedures.

Fifth, it is also apparent that patrimonial administration lacks a rational order of superiority and inferiority. Obediance and command are legitimated through tradition independent of any rational goal. This factor is closely connected with the problem of division of labour. As suggested above, the position of steward was more often regarded as an honour rather than a specific function or grouping of functions. Hence the relationship between the stewards and between them and the secretariat was essentially an ad hoc one unrelated to any grand plan of organisation designed to achieve certain ends. The attempts in the 1970's to rationalise and reorganise the duties of stewards and their interpenetration with the secretariat, reflect more conscious attempts to move away from the vestiges of patrimonial administration which is essentially unreflective about its organisation.

It also follows that such forms of organisation lack rational processes of law making regulated by custom and through which a certain body of rules is seen to have always been binding. While they are not rules in the sense of standard operating procedures, racing provides one of the earliest examples of a commercialised sport with a codified system of rules. The Rules of Racing do have an aura of sanctity about them. The rule system which emerged, however, did so piecemeal with additions and modifications being made in response to particular exigencies, in other words, reactively rather than as part of an attempt at complete regulation. It would be inaccurate, however, to claim that there was no process of rule making. As long ago as 1857, a Jockey Club committee was set up with the explicit purpose of overseeing the rules and rule revision and new sets of rules were frequently published (Black, 1891).

Weber's discussion also implies that innovations in rules or whatever, tend to be presented as rediscoveries of given truths, as re-enactments of old practices or intentions which perhaps have been lost over time, in this way preserving the status quo. One of the underlying legitimations for changes, for example, is embodied in the traditional generalism of maintaining the 'supremacy of the British Thoroughbred'.[27] The underlying anti-rationalism in the attitude towards change is also reflected in the negative response to particular attempts to introduce business rationality into racing. This lay as much behind the failed initiatives of Sir Joseph Hawley and Lord Durham to widen recruitment to the Club in the late nineteenth century as did the attempt by Mr. David Robinson to demonstrate, in the late 1960's, that racecourses could be run profitably. More importantly, however, a patrimonial administration can admit no concept of 'planning' and it was the hangover of this syndrome which was germane to some of the conflicts between the Jockey Club and the Levy Board in the late 1960's, an episode which is discussed in more detail below.

Under a patrimonial regime 'courtly life', governmental and regulatory functions remain interwined and it is the case, for example, that the Jockey Club was initially formed in about 1750 as a social club for gentlemen with a shared interest. Jockey Club membership remains today a medium of courtly sociability as well as possibly entailing administrative and representative functions for racing. This contrasts with the situation in France, for example, where the Societe d'Encouragement was formed in 1886 to oversee the business of racing, leaving the French Jockey Club as the medium for appropriate sociability among elite figures in racing and society.[28]

Finally, few racing participants would fail to appreciate the observation that those subordinate to a system of patrimonial regulation are regarded as subjects and not as members, with few (if any) rights. In disputes and matters of discipline they are subject to the discretionary power of the representatives of patrimonial authority, reliant on their good pleasure (or otherwise). In racing this is reflected in what is frequently described as the 'Star Chamber' quality of racing justice, with private and privileged hearings whose decisions are effectively final. There have been a number of instances where participants have sought help from the wider legal code in challenging this system though usually with scant success.[29] Ever since the legal right of the Jockey Club to 'warn off' offenders from Newmarket Heath was established in 1821 and, a little later, to publish such cases in the Racing Calendar, the courts have tended to support the jurisdiction of the Jockey Club.[30] In addition, many Jockey Club judgements appear to have been motivated by pique, jealousy and even spitefulness and such incidents are not unknow even in the recent post war period (Mortimer, 1979). Occasionally these have even led to a cooling of relations with the authorities in other countries.[31] However, this tendency again reflects the 'realm of free arbitrariness', characteristic of this form of domination and administration.

It is these features of patrimonialism then which underlie the more generalised characterisations to be found in the literature. Hence Khan is able to argue that the Jockey Club is:

> "An autocratic body boasting a huge proportion of the landed wealthy maintaining a lifestyle characteristic of inherited wealth, and claiming immunity from self-interest and guaranteed integrity ..."
>
> (Khan, 1980, p. 111)

Further, the author finds little difficulty in describing the Jockey Club as a 'governing elite' in Pareto's terms or indeed as a ruling class, insofar as it is a uniform elite with an autocratic power structure. As the author shows, the Jockey Club continues to display a marked homogeneity of membership. A large proportion of the membership are similarly styled and titled. Public school education was completely ubiquitous in the 1978 cohort, for example, two-thirds of which were 'old Etonians'. The membership displays a convergence of business and leisure interests and similarities in life style. Not surprisingly the author also found evidence of a high degree of attitudinal conscensus.

The recruitment practices have provided one of the perennial sources of criticism of the Club by other participants as the supposed lack of representativeness is held to prevent it serving the best interests of racing as a whole (Mortimer, 1979). This type of criticism has a long history and even in the nineteenth century some Jockey Club members themselves were moved to question the adequacy of the representativeness of the membership (Black, 1891). It would be inaccurate, however, to suggest that the Jockey Club kept its doors completely closed but initiatives were largely symbolic. As Vamplew observes "A few ageing industrialists might gain entry ..." but no inroads were made into the overall character of the Club (1976, p. 108). Black's (1891) early history of the Jockey Club reflects the same concerns. At one point he comments that there was no possibility of the Jockey Club being granted a 'charter of incorporation' because the Jockey Club was not "representative of any but a single class" (1891, p. 358). (Evidently this was not a consideration which weighed heavily when the Club received a Royal Charter in 1968!). He also argues that in one sense the nature of Jockey Club rule was unexceptional because, on the whole, the members tended to be prominent owners and breeders, that is members of the dominant and

most powerful interest group in racing in any case.

More recently the Club has admitted rather more 'proven' businessmen but interestingly, with one or two exceptions, these have tended to emerge from the 'tycoon elements' of commerce rather than from industry, and to have shown a preference for the commercial breeding business.[32] In addition, of course, the nature of landed wealth has changed somewhat and as was observed in Chapter Two, there has been an interpenetration of landed, commercial and financial wealth such as to make these distinctions largely spurious. This also means, of course, that the 'traditional' members are themselves no strangers to business matters. However, the character of the Club no more than reflects what would be expected of an organisation in control of its own recruitment.

There is some debate about how the Jockey Club reached its position of dominance. The conventional view preferred by racing commentators and representatives of the Jockey Club, constitutes a 'pull theory' on this question. This suggests that the power of the Jockey Club was augmented by a series of happy accidents. Originally instituted as a social club, the early concern was more with 'exclusion' than jurisdiction. However, the effects of this policy was to establish the Jockey Club as a prestigious body to which, naturally, disputes could be referred and from which advice sought. This is seen to have had a sort of snow-balling effect whereby the more influence grew, the greater was the demand for adjudication and regulation. In addition, the piecemeal purchases of the Newmarket grounds provided the Jockey Club with an increasingly powerful sanction - 'warning off' - in support of its judgements. Hence the claim by Mortimer (1958) that the power and jurisdiction of the Jockey Club was voluntarily bestowed by common consent. This has also been the message presented to various official

inquiries into gambling. For example, in evidence to the 1923 Select Committee on Betting Tax, the senior steward, Lord Jersey, argued that the authority of the Jockey Club had been delegated to it by common consent.

A rather more iconoclastic view is taken by Vamplew (1976) who argues instead that the Jockey Club may be seen to have arrogated to itself jurisdictional power over racing in a self-conscious and deliberate manner over a period of a hundred years or so, and in a way which cannot be explained simply in terms of the need for rules and discipline. While it is true, the author argues, that the origins of the Club were largely social, it is also the case that the members included many who were used to exercising political and social power of which the attempt to control the Turf may be seen as a logical extension. With control virtually complete at Newmarket by 1758, the fact that members acted as stewards at local meetings was bound to spread the influence of the Jockey Club. The 'impartiality' of the Club was symbolically established in 1791, when in its dealings with the Prince of Wales, the Club showed that it was no respector of reputation. By 1803 the Club had made known its own code of rules, four years later it had published the results of adjudicated cases, in 1815 it volunteered its arbitration services and six years later it had established the legal right to warn off. The publication of the membership list for the first time in 1835 could be calculated to intimidate local race executives:

> "The Club was out to bring all race meetings under unified control."
>
> (Vamplew, p. 84)

Both of these positions probably over-state their case and the most likely scenario is that broadly outlined by Black (1891) who accepts that the Jockey Club was initially innocent of its impending hegemony over racing but that

once its influence was felt, it adopted a more aggressive attitude to control, particularly in the second of the three periods delineated by the author, from 1773-1835. In this period the Jockey Club entered upon a course of "progressive domination" which culminated in undisputed autocracy (1891, p. 249). In this the publication of adjudicated cases in 1807 is seen as a master stroke.

The third period outlined by Black, from 1835 to 1891 was one which witnessed a stream of legislation which served to bolster the power of the Jockey Club and improve the integrity of racing. The period also included the reigns of the 'Great Reformers', Lord George Bentinck and Admiral Rous, who were responsible for many changes in the organisation and practice of racing. This regression to periods of quasi charismatic intervention also seems to be typical of patrimonial administration. Judging by some contemporary accounts, however, the integrity of racing left much to be desired even in the 1890's[33]. Jockeys were not officially barred from betting until 1884, doping appears to have been rife and the maxim that:

> "No man can make a certainty of his horse winning a race but he can make a certainty that he will lose one."
>
> (Contemporary Review, 1873)

appeared to be at the root of a great deal of malpractice. Still, one observer could claim that by 1885 the Turf was purer than at any time within living memory, though his reference point may have been extremely low![34]

If racing participants found it difficult to gain support from the law in challenging the Jockey Club, it is also true that the Jockey Club was very reluctant to resort to the law to enforce its power.[35] In retrospect,

however, there is perhaps one important instance in which a legal intervention proved very helpful in reinforcing the jurisdiction of the Jockey Club though at the time it was met by strong opposition from that quarter: it was as Black suggests, like showing a 'red rag to a bull'. In the 1870's a rash of troublesome and unrecognised race meetings sprang up around London which the Jockey Club finally seemed unable to control. In 1879 a Private Members's Bill was introduced to control them by law. Although the Jockey Club resisted this incursion into its sphere of authority, the effect of the bill would have been to reinforce Jockey Club control over racecourses, as in granting the required licences magistrates were bound to consider whether the meeting was approved by the Jockey Club. Incidentally, the Street Betting Act of 1906 also put a premium on racecourses being approved by the Jockey Club as only on such courses was cash betting legal. Practically and symbolically, however, this episode cemented the principle of Jockey Club jurisdiction over the racecourses, one which later became more formalised through licensing. By the same token, and this is crucial for an appreciation of the events of the 1960's, it also provided the basis for Jockey Club control over the fixture list. In any event, as Vamplew argues, by the last decades of the nineteenth century, racing was firmly under Jockey Club control.

While it would be inaccurate to view the Club as opposed to reform of any kind, it is clear that most changes have been reactive in character rather than initiatory: the Jockey Club appears to have developed the practice of leading from behind to a fine art. As Vamplew observes, the reticence which the Club has shown in its leadership role is somewhat at odds with its arrogation of power. Even in 1891, Black could note that procrastination seemed a perennial characteristic of the Club. Almost ninety years later, Mortimer could feel justified in observing dryly that the Jockey

Club is "never in a hurry to accede to popular demand" (1979, p. 5). Decades of public disquiet passed before jockeys were barred from betting, for example, and similar hesitation characterised attempts to deal with 'doping' from the late nineteenth century until the early 1950's when an official inquiry initiated a more systematic approach to the whole problem, though it still remains a sensitive issue today. Betting, of course, was the root of much malpractice but at that conjuncture were also to be found many Jockey Club members.

Indeed, Vamplew suggests that the attempts by Bentinck and Rous to clean up racing were sanctioned because so many Jockey Club members had an interest in gambling, a practice whose social basis would have collapsed if fraud and chicanery had continued at the rate and intensity current at the time. Even then Rous found in 1872 that his attempt to deal with the practice of 'pulling horses' was defeated by the self-interest of many Jockey Club members (Black, 1891).

As already seen, in terms of recruitment, the Jockey Club accommodated by co-opting non-traditional blood which was either too senile or in such small quantity to have any effect. One other device appears to have been used consistently to diffuse criticism and offer the appearance of reform. This has been the Jockey Club's penchant for initiating inquiries only to shelve the reports and recommendations. Two examples this century are the 1943 Report of the Racing Reorganisation Committee (Ilchester Report) and the 1968 Committee of Inquiry into the Racing Industry (Benson Report). Both of these reports in their own way made sharp analyses of the contemporary state of racing, making sensible and sometimes radical recommendations, many of which anticipated the analysis and prognosis of the later, independent Rothschild Commision of 1975. Roger Mortimer notes,

referring to the Benson Report:

> "Unfortunately, like other plans for Turf reform, it has bever been implemented and no doubt it is tidily stacked away on a shelf in Portman Square next to the Report of the Ilchester Committee, both accumulating a layer of rarely disturbed dust."
>
> (Mortimer, 1979, p. 236)

In fact the Benson Report did appear to be 'dusted off' temporarily as in its re-submission to the Royal Commission, the Jockey Club made proposals which were very similar to those made by Benson.[36] However, as Parker (1968) argues, even in framing the terms of reference of such reports the Jockey Club's view of racing interests has always been weighted in favour of the status quo.

Nevertheless, as has been shown in relation to the early betting tax and the creation of the Tote, the Jockey Club has not been slow in making use of the wider political influence of its members to lobby government when its interests were threatened. As was seen in Chapter Three, the Jockey Club was active at the highest levels over threats posed to racing by betting legislation and the two World Wars also saw the Club in close contact with the government for the protection of racing in wartime. The Jockey Club has rarely refused an opportunity to advance its case before the many government inquiries to which it has given evidence, including that of the momentous Peppiatt Committee of 1959 which itself was the outcome of a considerable lobby in the 1950's.

This then was broadly the character of the Jockey Club confronting the latter half of the twentieth century. Many writers have wondered about its longevity and the reasons for its ability to survive in the face of an increasingly hostile environment. Khan (1980) argues, for example, that two

main factors seem to account for this persistence. Firstly, there is the legitimating ideology of the disinterested nature of the Jockey Club and its hierarchy. Its financial independence has enabled it to cultivate a view of itself as being concerned with the well being of the activity as a whole. This is a relevant factor though it is probable that the ideology of the Jockey Club has been mistaken for the perceptions of the participants and the point is therefore overstated. Secondly, the Jockey Club is seen more recently to have made marginal but critical concessions to newly involved and potentially disruptive groups in racing. Most important here probably is the expanding group of owners from the professional middle class who are perhaps less content than their predecessors with merely apeing the status of the upper class and wish for more effective representation in decision making.

It is true that in the last decade the Racehorse Owners Association, for example, has been a more strident lobby and other pressure groups such as the British Racing Industries Confederation, sprang up in the 1970's, dissatisfied with the representation of the producer groups in the industry. The Jockey Club's response to these, however, could hardly be said to be 'critical'. In 1976 the Racing Industry Liaison Committee was set up - replacing the discredited Joint Industry Liaison Committee, to provide a forum for industry representation to the Jockey Club. The body scarcely seems to have been taken seriously and in any case was soon superceded by the Horserace Advisory Council which emerged out of the dust of the Royal Commission. However, the author also suggests that the streamlining of the Jockey Club's authority structure and some changes in recruitment also combined to diffuse antipathy towards the Club. Somewhat less relevant factors, it is suggested, are the slow rate of technical change in racing which has reduced the pressure on ascriptive recruitment criteria and the

possibility that those engaged in a 'leisure' activity are naturally more kindly disposed towards the leadership than in other spheres.

Curiously, one of the explanations rejected is the role of Weatherby's as the Jockey Club secretariat though the existence of such a 'loyal' body is seen to have aided the Jockey Club's cause. There is no doubt that this factor cannot be regarded as a sufficient condition for the survival of the Jockey Club but the analysis of the nature of patrimonial administration indicates that something along the lines of the Weatherby's ingredient would be a necessary condition. It was this body of officials working at the operational level which provided one pillar of continuity on which the Jockey Club was supported. As Rickman (1951) argues, the stewards came and went but the traditional strategic policy and the 'nuts and bolts' of operational administration were preserved by Weatherby's. Weatherby's indeed provides a curious case of the means of administration being handed down within a family. Between 1770 and 1930, for example, there were six incumbents of the position of 'Keeper of the Matchbook' and head of the family firm.

This relationship has been much misunderstood within racing, a confusion which has served the Jockey Club well. Much would-be criticism of the Club has been displaced onto Weatherby's as the bearers of bad news and regulation rather than the authors of it. The firm rather than the Jockey Club, has borne the brunt of accusations of 'red tape' and so on. One commentator, a former trainer, thus describes Weatherby's as the over-bureaucratic tail 'wagging the dog'. (Parker, 1968, p. 19).

For many participants in racing Weatherby's still connotes the image of the nineteenth century counting house described by Lockwood (1958), for example, but as might be predicted from Weber's discussion, the continuity

afforded by such a body of officials has enabled, especially since internal reorganisation and relocation in the early 1960's, the emergence of a rationally based organisation from the kernel of patrimonial organisation. In recent years, Weatherby's salaried officers have been recruited on the basis of achievement criteria and graduate qualifications, conscious attention has been given to the division of labour and lines of authority and extensive use has been made of computer technology in processing and recording the daily happenings and administration of racing. The regularising of its relationship with the Jockey Club through a renegotiable contract is also indicative of the emergent 'legal rationality' of the enterprise.

It would seem a mistake then to neglect the role of this singular organisation in accounting for the Jockey Club's survival, but Khan is correct to avoid a monocausal explanation. The Jockey Club has been 'lucky' in that through little design of its own, a number of factors have conspired to support its hegemony over racing. Apart from those factors intrinsic to Jockey Club organisation itself, another appears to be the individualism and self-interest which have typically worked to fragment any possible opposition.

This was the kind of institution exercising control over racing then which lie in wait for any state intervention. Having considered early and marginal state initiatives, it now remains to trace the emergence and role of the Levy Board and its penetration into the world of racing, bookmaking and indeed that of the Jockey Club.

The Creation of the Levy Board

It was argued earlier that the genesis of the Tote could be explained almost entirely in terms of 'politics' in the sense of the term outlined by Offe. The same can also be said of the Horserace Betting Levy Board which was

formally instituted by the Betting Levy Act of 1961. However, the Levy Board's subsequent policies and operations soon came to display an overtly managerialist logic and cannot be explained simply in terms of interest group pressure.

The protohistory of any organisation is usually substantial, however, and that of the Levy Board is no exception. Notwithstanding the previous discussion of the Totalisator, the most immediate point of reference for considering the creation of the Levy Board is the 1949-51 Royal Commission on Gambling. It will be recalled that the Commission recommended in principle the legislation of off-course cash betting, a proposal which was not implemented until 1960. The intervening decade witnessed a good deal of political manoeuvring on the part of the major interest groups. Government prevarication over the legislation as Hood (1976) argues, appears to have been mainly the result of opposition from and divisions within the racing and betting world though the moral questions also continued to be prominent in public discourse at least. The racing lobby in particular, however, appears to have been substantial.

A major unifying element of this lobby was the ideology of the racing establishment, namely of the owner-breeder faction in control at the Jockey Club, which purveyed a view of the racing industry as being in a state of crisis. This was a diagnosis which has been a more or less perennial theme since the symbol of 'industry' first gained currency among racing people in the first decade of the century. The industry was seen to be drained of its best bloodstock to overseas, its richest prizes plundered - principally by the French - and was continually being 'milked' by the bookmakers of money properly 'belonging' to racing. The relatively low ratio of prize money to training costs, declining numbers of horses in training, the export of prime

blood lines, from time to time provided some support for this view exaggerated though it always was. These arguments also re-surfaced in the run-up to the 1975 Royal Commission.[37]

This broadly was the case put to the 1949 Commission and floated throughout the 1950's; the legalisation of cash betting could not be contemplated without some form of compensatory arrangement for racing. Even then, at the time of the Royal Commission racecourse interests were not keen to see the post war boom in racecourse attendances whittled away whatever safety net was provided. However, with declining attendances in the 1950's, racing interests coalesced, directing more critical attention towards the bookmakers who were commonly seen as parasitic on the industry.[38] This view became particularly virulent in 1956 and led to heated controversy.

This was also the year in which more concerted efforts were made to alert government to the plight of the industry in the context of the anticipated legislation. As Mortimer argues, while government spokesmen mouthed a concern with morality, the racing world was only concerned with the pragmatic details of possible arrangements, impatient with "niggling objections and avoidable delays" (Mortimer, 1979, p. 128). The Jockey Club set up the Joint Betting Bill Committee comprised of representatives of major interests in the industry, to formulate basic principles in respect of the intended legislation. This would form the basis of the advice given by the Jockey Club stewards to the Home Secretary. There was a ready response from the Home Office and later that year the stewards were asked to produce a paper outlining the state of the industry, a case for hypothecation for racing and the rubric of an organisation to handle such a process and the control of horserace betting. The preference of the Jockey

Club hierarchy at this time was for some kind of Tote Monopoly, hence these terms of reference were not altogether welcome. In any event it appeared that at a later meeting between the stewards and the Home Secretary, the Jockey Club response had been rejected and that the principle of hypothecation from the off-course betting market had not been accepted anyway. Support for the legislation was withdrawn by the Jockey Club but in any case proposals subsequently failed to appear in the next Queen's Speech.

In the interim, the campaign was intensified in Parliament principally by the Astors, influential owner-breeders who had representatives in each 'House'. Ironically, in view of later developments, the lobby found further support from George Wigg, parliamentarian and member of the R.B.C.B., who sponsored a Private Member's Bill along 'Tote Monopoly' lines. Failing to get a second reading in March 1958, it went the way of a similar attempt in 1955.[39] Moody (1959) has argued that all this indicates the determination of racing interests to promote favourable legislation vis-a-vis the bookmakers at almost any cost. In any event, it seems that the racing lobby did enough to indicate that its co-operation was important for the operation of any legislation and that its interests could be ignored only with peril. The legalisation of cash betting shops without direct relief for racing would indeed be the final straw as far as it was concerned.

The approach of the bookmakers meanwhile was more fragmented as legislation of this kind would affect their interests differentially (Hood, 1970). Neither the large credit bookmakers nor the illegal operators in the South had capital invested in betting 'premises' in the same way that 'cash' bookmakers did in the North. Bookmakers as a whole, however, also evidently saw little point in the legalisation of cash betting merely to allow

them the privilege of supporting the ailing racing industry (Moody, 1959) However, in 1958 off-course bookmakers did, in fact, initiate the Racecourse Amenities Fund as a pool for voluntary contributions for racing, though this was soon put on ice pending the legislation. This was finally tabled in 1959 as the widespread disregard of the 'Victorian betting legislation', among other factors (Downes, 1976), meant that firm proposals could be delayed no longer.

It was against this background then, in an apparent change of heart and clear attempt to sweeten racing interests, that the Government set up the Peppiatt Committee in November 1959 to investigate the possibility of subjecting horserace betting to a levy for 'purposes conducive to the improvement of breeds of horses and the sport of horse-racing'. It was also charged with advising on the amount of a levy and the means of achieving it.

In evidence, the racing lobby excelled itself in repeating the familiar arguments. Racing was not only part of British cultural heritage but also a sizeable industry - albeit one in a perilous state. Here the submissions from the major racing interests revolved around four main themes which by now were well rehearsed, namely:

(i) the decline of British bloodstock;

(ii) the worsening situation of owners in relation to both the ratio of available prize money to training costs and the high proportion of prize money supplied by the owners themselves in the form of stakes;

(iii) the uneconomic nature of training; and

(iv) the dilapidated condition of racecourse amenities.

The Jockey Club argued for a 1.5% levy on betting turnover for the benefit

of racing.

It is clear that the Committee was impressed by the consistency of the arguments but was not intimidated. It noted that there was, characteristically, little hard evidence presented in support. It concluded that although a levy was desirable, this rested on the case for 'improvement' not on the argument that the industry was in 'decline' - the industry would not die without a levy, the Committee insisted.

The bookmakers' position had mellowed with time as they showed no open hostility to the principle of a levy. This appeared to be a necessary price for the legalisation of cash betting which finally proved too attractive a prospect to pass up. More pragmatically they attempted to ensure that the computation and collection of the levy would not be totally beyond their control. Peppiatt indeed ostensibly embodied this desire in the recommendation for a Bookmakers' Levy Board which would collect and transmit funds to a central Levy Board for distribution, though this arrangement was proposed in order to keep down administrative costs. In fact this was the subject of the only substantial modification made in the legislation to the Committee's proposals and the bookmakers had to be satisfied with a Bookmakers' (consultative) Committee.

The levy was duly recommended and embodied in the Betting Levy Act 1961. The Bill created the Horserace Betting Levy Board and charged it with assessing and collecting a levy on horserace betting and allocating funds for the improvement of breeds of horses, horse-racing and the advancement of veterinary science. Thereby the allocatory functions of the R.B.C.B. were taken over and it was reconstituted as the Horserace Totalisator Board. The Levy Board was constituted in a way which was to become typical of

'quangos' and 'tripartism' in the following decades. The Board comprised representatives of the major interests, namely the Jockey Club and National Hunt Committee, the H.T.B. and the Bookmakers plus a group of government appointed independent members from whom came the Chairman. Though ultimately responsible to the Home Secretary, the legislation invested the Levy Board with considerable financial and organisational autonomy.

There seems little doubt that the Levy Board emerged as part of the interest dealing attendant upon the reform of certain instruments of social control. Further, it was a development which certain interests within the state could be expected to view with misgivings. The Treasury, for example, has a long tradition of opposition to hypothecation. In view of the later discussion, it might be speculated at this point that this would have been a small price for the Treasury to pay for the fiscal potential of betting opened up by the legislation. There is precious little evidence for this view implied by Allum (1980), however, and it can hardly be said that the Treasury leapt at the renewed possibility of taxing betting. There is little to suggest, then, that the Levy Board was a result of long term strategic planning as opposed to a pragmatic, temporising accommodation to the politics of the situation.

Within the next decade, however, the evolving strategies of the Board evidenced managerialist tendencies which were not anticipated at the time of the legislation either by the racing authorities or bookmaking trade. Serious conflicts in fact broke out with both these groups though the long term interests of both were served by the Board. The emergent strategy of the Board, however, appears more clearly from a consideration first, of the relation between the Board and bookmaking capital from which it was to derive its revenue.

The Levy Board and Bookmaking Capital

The formal rationale of the Levy Board clearly lay in its 'output' relationship to horse-racing and ancilliary activities. However, the operations of the Board have also had an important influence on the development of the bookmaking industry and particularly on the development of monopoly capital in bookmaking. Although this point is taken up in the next section, it was also at this juncture that important issues of racing control were raised. In short, however, it may be argued that this somewhat obscure state agency founded some important conditions for the growth of the monopoly bookmaking wing. Moreover, this outcome emerged from initiatives within the agency with no perceptible influence from capitalist interests within bookmaking. It is in this connection that a managerialist logic can be a scribed to the Levy Board.

The Levy Board has had a somewhat contradictory relationship with bookmakers. On the one hand, as far as the individual bookmaking firm is concerned, the levy payments represent a drain on liquid capital and overall profitability. It is true, for reasons outlined below, that since 1969 the punter has borne the brunt of the levy payment. However, this still directly affects the amount available for re-betting, turnover and hence, in the end, profitability. In terms of short term economic interests the levy is an obligation the bookmaker would rather do without although there is an awareness that the 'goose must be fed'. On the other hand, the activities of the Board have been of direct support to the accumulation process in bookmaking as a whole though not all interests benefited to the same extent.

There are two ways in which such benefits have accrued. Of minor importance and difficult, if not impossible to quantify, is the effect of policies to increase and maintain the integrity of racing. It is a matter of

some controversy as to how far the integrity of racing is relevant to the propensity to bet on it and betting behaviour does seem to be relatively inelastic.[40] However, it would be premature to underestimate the importance of the appearance of legality in enticing millions of people to invest in the 'Turf'. While racing still has plenty of scope for sharp practice and is subject to some routine forms of manipulation by participants, the more blatant forms of outside interference are subject to much greater control and its status as a betting medium considerably enhanced.[41]

Much more important, however, were the effects of the strategy of the expansion and rationalisation of racing fixtures oriented to maximising the levy and the funds at the disposal of the Board. Such a policy of attempting to increase the volume of the levy other than by merely raising the relative contribution of the bookmaker, was mooted in the earliest years of the Board [42], but was not effectively initiated until the middle 1960's and was not consolidated until the end of the decade. The crux of the strategy was simply to ensure that racing took place on every week day and that race times were staggered to realise the optimum number of consecutive betting events to stimulate turnover and revenue. This, of course, required some movement from the Jockey Club over the fixtures list, which as was shown earlier, had been a pivotal issue in racing control. A factor which also restricted the potential of such a policy was the means of assessing the levy. For most of the 1960's this had been calculated on the basis of the number of premisses and the profitability of bookmaking enterprises. This meant that the link between the turnover of stakes and the size of the levy was indirect, if close. The lucrative results of the Betting Duty introduced in 1966, however, had demonstrated the possibilities of a tax on stakes. Less than two years after the first round of betting duty, the Levy Board under George Wigg began to shift the emphasis in the levy assessment from

profits to turnover, a move which was complete by 1974.[43] This move effectively switched the levy obligation from the bookmaker to the punter.[44] It also unleashed the full potential of the programme of expansion begun a little earlier. In 1967, for example, racecourses were guaranteed against loss for holding meetings on unprofitable days; evening meetings (when betting shops were closed) held at the expense of afternoon fixtures were discouraged. The policy was intensified with the arrival of Wigg who openly advocated 'expansionist policies'.[45] In 1968, it was announced that in the following year at least one meeting and possibly two (now the norm) would be arranged for each weekday with staggered race times; prize money grants would be used to subsidise poorly attended meetings and a winter transfer scheme was later introduced for the transfer of meetings affected by exceptionally bad weather. With the introduction of levy assessment on turnover, a direct premium was placed on the expansion of fixtures and the provision of continuous betting opportunities which, interestingly, was against the spirit of the 1960 legislation if not against the letter.

The pattern of fixture expansion can be seen in Table 38. It can be seen that although the trend since 1961 is upwards, in the years before 1968 it is slightly erratic, there being three occasions on which the number of planned fixtures actually decreased. The year following Wigg's accession in 1967, however, showed a marked increase in planned fixtures and small increases were then subsequently maintained. By 1977, there were 17% more planned fixtures thatn in 1967 and 26% more than in 1961. The overwhelming proportion of this increase is accounted for by National Hunt racing where the gaps in daily fixture coverage were most common and racing most likely to be affected by the weather. There were 35% more planned National Hunt fixtures than in 1967. From the point of view of racing and the levy it is, of course, the actual fixtures which take place (i.e.

Table 38 Racing Fixtures, 1961-1980

Year	Flat		Jumping		Mixed		Total		Year on % Increase		% Increase on 1967	
1961	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned *	Actual *	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
1961	444	443	334	307			778	850				
1962	435	432	336	289			771	721	-0.9	-3.9		
1963	432	427	355	255			787	682	2.0	8.4		
1964	412	405	360	326	12	12	784	743	-0.4	8.2		
1965	409	408	366	317	29	28	804	753	2.0	1.3		
1966	435	423	384	325	26	26	845	774	5.1	2.8		
1967	437	430	379	296	21	21	837	747	-0.9	-3.4		
1968	426	416	437	366	20	19	883	801	5.4	7.2	5.5	7.2
1969	421	407	408	366	19	19	888	792	0.5	-1.1	5.8	6.0
1970	408	404	468	400	19	19	895	822	0.7	3.7	6.9	10.0
1971	406	402	476	437	16	16	898	855	0.3	4.0	7.3	14.5
1972	408	407	483	436	18	18	909	861	1.2	0.7	8.6	15.3
1973	417	405	462	462	16	16	924	894	1.6	3.8	10.4	19.7
1974	453	443	468	411	18	18	939	872	1.6	-2.5	12.2	16.7
1975	456	443	475	424	16	15	947	882	1.1	1.1	13.1	18.1
1976	458	448	482	416	8	8	948	874	0.01	-0.9	13.3	17.0
1977	459	459	512	432	8	8	979	896	3.2	2.5	17.0	19.1
1978	460	454	488	409	8	8	956	871	-2.3	-2.8	14.2	16.6
1979	461	450	490	384	6	6	957	840	0.1	-2.9	14.3	12.4
1980	459	452	491	440	6	6	956	898	-0.1	6.9	14.2	20.2

*no separate figures for mixed meetings available (included with Flat)

Source: Adapted from Racing Statistical Information Digest, Horserace Betting Levy Board; Racing Industry Statistics Bureau, Statistics 1975-80, 1976-81.

weather permitting) which is important. From the point of view of the monopoly bookmaker, however, for reasons which will be evident below, the expectation of daily betting opportunities is also important as punters habituated to the daily availability of the main betting medium are more likely to have their allegiances transferred to other forms such as the 'dogs' when racing inadvertently fails to take place than when it does not take place as a matter of routine. In these circumstances it makes sense to open betting shops on a daily basis and this is extremely important for the exploitation of the labour process by betting chain proprietors in particular, who have sizeable overheads. In any event, clearly underlying the policy of the Board was the assumption that what was good for the betting industry was good for racing.[46]

To a certain extent this is evident from Table 39 where quite sizeable increases in total betting turnover and in the volume of the levy can be seen to have followed the working through of the expansion programme and the changing basis of the levy calculation. Total betting turnover more than doubled in 1968 over the previous year and the levy increased by 50% in 1970, the first year of the move towards the emphasis on turnover in assessing the levy.

Hence it is not entirely accidental that these practices coincide with the period of rapid growth of the large bookmaking chains. The germ of this process is discernible in the middle 1960's when there were already some small and medium localised chains. At this time also the larger erstwhile credit bookmakers began to take a serious interest in betting shops. However, the rapid growth and concentration of the larger enterprises occurred at the turn of the 1970's.[47] The trend of monopolisation was

Table 39 Horserace Betting Turnover and Levy, 1966-77

Year	On-Course £000	Totalisator £000	Off-Course £000	Total £000	Levy £m.
1966/7	15,040	8,200	225,376	248,616	2.3
1967/8	57,207	37,915	777,504	872,626	2.6
1968/9	47,463	31,235	711,760	790,458	2.6
1969/70	47,621	30,200	792,640	869,861	3.9
1970/1	55,279	28,889	832,405	916,573	4.3
1971/2	58,500	26,802	928,813	1,014,115	5.0
1972/3	66,212	27,710	1,030,114	1,124,036	5.6
1973/4	69,875	29,474	1,165,250	1,264,599	6.7
1974/5	77,285	32,351	1,267,994	1,377,630	8.2
1975/6	83,860	34,984	1,396,426	1,515,270	8.1
1976/7	86,050	32,548	1,449,184	1,567,782	9.8

Source: Horserace Betting Levy Board, Racing Statistical Information Digest.

probably inevitable but there is little doubt that favourable conditions for this growth were laid by the Board's policies. This is because the problem of large overheads and labour utilisation became far more manageable with the advent of daily betting events, where racing is estimated to generate 75-80% of off-course betting turnover. These are also conditions which render far less problematic the transition from 'bookmaking' to 'retailing', that is the routinsation and mechanisation of bookmaking operations and the routine spreading of liabilities across a large number of outlets and betting events. The necessity of balancing the book and monitoring liabilities on single events and the demands which this makes on labour, evaporate. The embryonic monopoly wing of bookmaking would have benefited more in this than the small operation (Hood, 1972).

The notion of bookmaking as 'retailing' is most developed by Allum (1980) though it is implicit in the earlier work of Hood (1972). A full discussion of the development of bookmaking is beyond the scope of this thesis, but Allum, interestingly, has looked at the development of the post-legislation expansion of cash betting from the perspective of the implications for the labour process in bookmaking. However, Allum correctly argues that "The development of the betting medium was both a consequence of the expansion of off-coure cash betting and a precondition for its continuation" (1980, p. 147). Clearly the Horserace Betting Levy Board played a crucial role in this. There is also some truth in the author's claim that the traditional relationship between racing and betting became reversed with the former now parasitic on the latter, but as the discussion in Chapter Three has shown, this underestimates the extent to which this has always been the case. Nevertheless, Marks' (1972) observation that the central contradiction of British racing that Britain is a nation of punters but not

racegoers was starkly amplified by the policies of the Board. Racing was 'staged' for the betting public while racecourse attendances fell as Table 40 broadly indicates, but of course these factors were not entirely unrelated.[48]

Table 40 Racecourse Attendances

Year	Total Public Attendance (000's)	Average Daily Public Attendance	No. of Fixtures*
1960	5,475	7,584	750
1965	5,219	7,006	753
1970	4,103	5,010	822
1975	4,340	4,921	882
1979	4,105	4,900	846

*Actual fixtures

Source: Racing Statistical Information Digest, Horserace Betting Levy Board and the Racing Industry Statistics Bureau, Statistics, 1975-1979

Conducive as the Board's policies were to the process of accumulation in bookmaking, it would be a mistake to adopt an 'instrumentalist' view of this development. The 'big four' bookmakers were in no position at this time to influence the Board's policies in this direction. Indeed, to all intents and purposes, they did not exist as monopoly bookmakers. It seems clear that the policies were generated internally by the Board, particularly under the more forceful influence of George Wigg. In addition the history of conflict between the Levy Board and the Bookmaking trade, indicates that the benefits of the Levy Board activities were not altogether evident to the trade. These conflicts, which reflect the contradictory relationship between the Board and the bookmakers noted earlier, have been highly charged from time to time, particularly over the form and amount of the Levy.[49] Relations reached a trough in 1969 when fresh legislation was enacted in the face of bookmaker intransigence.[50] The ingenuity of capital in avoiding

payments to the state has not by-passed the bookmaking industry and problems concerned with collecting the Levy continued during the 1970's. Even in 1981, twenty years after the formation of the Board a major dispute ensued over the size of the Levy which eventually required the mediation of the Home Secretary.[51] The Board then appears to have been relatively independent of the bookmakers and in no way can the Levy Board as a state agency, be seen as the 'tool' of private capital.

One final element in this complex of relations should be mentioned. When betting tax was introduced in 1966 it meant that the Treasury also had a direct interest in the expansion of cash betting and, indeed, in the expansionist policies of the Levy Board. By 1979, for example, horserace betting was generating £138 million in tax revenue (96% off-course). We have also seen that in taxing turnover rather than profits, the Treasury showed the Levy Board the means by which to increase its own revenue. It is tempting here to see a state conspiracy working beneath the concern with morality and social control in the interests of fiscality. Allum indeed suggests that the legislation of cash betting in 1960 can partly be explained by the government's anticipation, "no doubt under the prompting of the Treasury", of a successful tax (Allum, 1980, p. 112). This would fit a Marxist scenario of these events quite well and this is taken up in more detail in the concluding section. Unfortunately, there is no evidence of such a link and for the moment the machinations of the Treasury remain cloudy.[52]

If the Levy Board then can be said to have acted relatively independently of bookmakers, simultaneously providing conditions for the further development of the trade while attracting frequent hostility from 'empirical' bookmaking interests, the same, curiously is also broadly true of

the Board's relationship with its 'client', the racing industry. Hence it is to this relationship to which attention is turned next, particularly in terms of relations with the Jockey Club and the effects of policies on key areas in the racing business.

The Levy Board and Racing

There is virtually no aspect of racing in which the Levy Board is not in some way implicated. It has become an integral part of the sporting, organisational and commercial map of racing. This in itself represents a rapid and profound change in an activity whose internal organisation, structure and control remained more or less unaltered for almost two centuries. In general terms, however, the Levy Board has attempted to adopt a broad perspective on the long term interests of the industry and has appeared as its conscience and the bearer of 'political' commonsense and indirectly as the gatekeeper for wider legislative developments.[53] As a statutory body the Board could not afford to be compromised by apparent collusion with legally dubious, archaic or unjust practices in the industry and this has had reverberations in a number of areas. The strategies of the Board, indeed, have been both informed and supported by the recognition that it is finally a statutory body. This recognition and the attendant attempt to bring racing to an appreciation of prevailing legalistic and industrial principles of the twentieth century was also germane to the difficult relationship which the Board 'enjoyed' with the Jockey Club in the 1960's and 1970's.

The Levy Board and the Jockey Club

In general terms an 'accommodation' has marked the relationship between the Board and the Jockey Club but it has been an uneasy one which has erupted periodically into overt conflict. It is not difficult to see the source of this

conflict though it goes beyond the simply overlap in authority of the two bodies noted by the Royal Commission. The factor which has added the edge to this situation has been the increasingly 'directive' manner of the Board's intervention and its encroachment on the traditionalist hegemony of the Jockey Club.[54] Clearly the basis of this encroachment has been the considerable financial leverage of the Board and the increasing dependence of the industry on this form of state patronage.

However, as we have seen, state involvement in racing began before 1960. The R.B.C.B. performed similar allocatory functions to the Levy Board without undue disturbance to the traditional organisation of racing. Whether or not there was the political will to do otherwise, the R.B.C.B. lacked the material basis to play anything but a supportive and subordinate role vis-a-vis the industry and its controllers, restricted as it was to the allocation of funds generated by the Tote.[55] A levy on all horserace betting conversely meant a quantum leap in the funds available for distribution and with this also grew the public accountability of the Board. This was also accentuated by the changed basis of assessment of the levy in the late 1960's which also led to marked increases in the volume of funds. Indeed, it was precisely over the 'allocatory' role of the Board that the earliest battles with the Jockey Club were fought.

An early indication of the likely turn of events was given by the setting up of the Turf Board, the constitution of which epitomised the Jockey Club's view of the Levy Board and the role it was expected to play. Formed in 1964, the Turf Board was headily described as a 'new supreme authority' for racing. Comprised of Jockey Club and National Hunt Committee members, it was to concern itself with general policy, the everyday details of which would then be delegated to the Jockey Club and National Hunt Committee.

Although the Levy Board would be invited to represent its view to the Turf Board, significantly it was to have no place on this committee as of right. Remarkably, in the short term its expenses were met by the Levy Board but as will be seen below, it soon became a casualty of the mounting discord.

The conflict over the allocatory responsibilities of the Board also surfaced early in the Board's history. As was noted earlier, the old R.B.C.B. was heavily influenced by racing interests. Its procedure for allocating funds was that the stewards of the Jockey Club and National Hunt Committee would approve claims from individual racecourses which were then, through Weatherby's, forwarded to the R.B.C.B. They were then 'rubber stamped' as 'agreed claims' and settled subject to the availability of funds.[56] The crucial stage for any claim was its passage through the joint Jockey Club/National Hunt approval committee. Given that the functions of the Levy Board were couched in the same wide and general terms as those of the legislation governing the R.B.C.B., there was good reason for the Turf authorities to expect this situation to continue and it was expected to continue.

In the brief transition period it did so, as those claims already in the pipeline went through, but it then became clear that the Levy Board required a more active role in determining the distribution of the Levy. Mortimer states that Lord Harding, the first chairman of the Board "did not find it difficult to co-operate with the Jockey Club" (1979, p. 160), but judging by statements made later by Harding[57] this is not entirely accurate and the issue of allocatory procedures seemed already to be prominent. At first, however, confrontation was avoided as Harding attempted to reason and persuade the inner Jockey Club cabal away from the view that the Board's function was simply to collect the money and then take instructions on its allocation. Even such diplomacy, however, was insufficient to protect the

Board from vehement criticism as Jockey Club notables began to see legal and financial reality steadily confronting their traditional power. In 1964, for example, the senior steward felt compelled to warn that "racing is still under the rules of the Jockey Club, not under the rules of the Levy Board".[58] As if to demonstrate this, in the same year there ensued a scandal resulting from the Jockey Club effectively committing Levy funds to a contract with a private security firm without the full knowledge of the Board. This issue simmered until Lord Wigg finally set up an independent security organisation funded by the Board. This was such a sensitive issue with the Jockey Club because the question touched on a keystone of its authority, namely the control of racing discipline.

The accession of Lord Wigg to the chairmanship of the Levy Board witnessed an escalation of overt conflict. There was a tendency in racing and the media to view this situation as the result of a conflict of personalities. This was only minimally true although the intersection of personal career trajectories added more fuel to the underlying confrontation between the principles of organisation embodied in the two institutions. Wigg was well aware of the Jockey Club position from his direct experience of the R.B.C.B. and it soon became clear that in contradistinction to that experience, the Levy Board would pursue its statutory duties to the limits of the literal meaning of the Act. The money was to be 'well spent' and the Board not the Jockey Club, would determine finally how it would be spent. Grudgingly, this gradually became accepted by the Jockey Club though deep resentment continued to be harboured by an influential owner breeder group of ex-stewards which included the Duke of Norfolk.

A symbolic event in this respect was the first (and last) encounter of Wigg with the Turf Board to which he had been virtually summoned to

'explain' some remarks made in a television interview. This was a mistake on the part of the Turf authorities because Wigg, unlike Harding, was a seasoned parliamentarian and committee member, used to summoning officials and not being interrogated by them. The meeting ended abruptly, Levy Board finance for the Turf Board ceased, and indeed nothing was heard of this committee again.[59] It was replaced by the Joint Racing Board but this was to be virtually only a consultative body and on this occasion the chairmanship was shared between the senior steward and Levy Board chairman. Following this abrasive meeting, Wigg became increasingly critical of the control of racing which culminated in a famous analogy which Wigg drew between the Jockey Club and 'a well kept veteran motor car'. Somewhat eccentrically, the Duke of Norfolk used the public address system at Ascot to make a reply to this alleged obsolescence of the Jockey Club, probably to the embarrassment of many of the Jockey Club hierarchy.

However, Wigg's tack at this time expressed a deeper concern with future direction as a whole. The Board was not merely concerned with 'doling out' money to maintain the existing structure but with the 'improvement of the sport of horse-racing'.[60] An attempt was made to introduce the foreign notion of strategic planning into the organisation of racing.[61] This was most directly expressed in the expansion programme discussed earlier. The issue of racing fixtures had been a sticking point as early as 1964[62] but, as we have seen, there was a more concerted attempt in the late 1960's to force a reorganisation of fixtures along more systematic lines from the point of view of the levy. This was an issue on which the problem of the allocation of the levy and the control of fixtures was very closely related. This was because filling the gaps in the programme was bound to mean relatively more money ploughed into the lesser racecourses and 'humdrum' races. It also followed that relatively more should be

invested in the kind of races which attracted the punters' interests and generated a greater volume of turnover and levy. These were assumed to be the popular 'handicap' rather than 'pattern' races. However, for the commercially oriented breeders and owners, it is the latter which are more important, determining the relative quality of the better horses and their value for breeding purposes. This issue finally broke in 1972 when the Jockey Club side of the Joint Racing Board failed in its attempt to substantially raise prize money differential between higher grade courses which stage the pattern races, and the lower grade courses.[63] While the Levy Board achieved some movement on this issue, the pattern races still consume a disproportionate amount of the levy. However, the whole issue of prize money is discussed below. The problem of the control of fixtures, however, remains sensitive and although both sides have some purchase on decision making[64], it is clear that the Levy Board would like more. This was made plain in its submission to the Royal Commission and a little later the Chairman, Sir Desmond Plummer, is quoted as saying:

> "... while the Board agrees that such matters as licensing and discipline should remain in the hands of a non-statutory body, responsibility for the fixture list and other matters which have direct and substantial financial implications should rest with the statutory authority."[65]

The Jockey Club's penchant for unpredictability, its alleigance to traditional symbols and arguments was still a source of irritance even under the perhaps more concilliatory chairmanship of Plummer. In 1977, for example, the Jockey Club managed to provoke a bitter response from him when it re-submitted proposals to the Royal Commission for the reorganisation of racing control which were diametrically opposed to its original submission which had been agreed through the Joint Racing Board.[66]

On some important issues then there were clear differences between the two bodies but on one issue there emerged a consensus which did no more than reinforce the status quo in the industry. This was the assumption that the most important means of discharging the Board's function in the improvement of horse-racing was the use of prize money. In one of the first pronouncements, improved levels of prize money were seen both as a means of injecting money into the whole racing and breeding industry and to be capable of restoring the declining international prestige of British racing.[67] Prize money was seen to percolate through to all levels and sections of the industry, to trainers, jockeys and stable lads. Owners would be able to afford higher training fees, higher returns would result for trainers, better wages for stable employees and so on. Owners would also be prepared to pay higher prices for bloodstock. In much the same form this policy was advocated by Lord Wigg in 1970[68] and more recently and often by Sir Desmond Plummer.[69] Indeed, as Table 41 indicates, the 1970's appear to have witnessed an increased emphasis on prize money. For example, in the first seven years until 1969, the average annual proportion of current expenditure earmarked for prize money was 26.9%. From 1969 to 1977 that figure has increased to 45.1%, reaching a peak of over 50% in 1976/77.

There have been a few subversive voices which have levelled the accusation of 'subsidising the rich' at the Levy Board. The rejoinders have merely asserted the 'percolation principle' and stressed other services provided by the Board. While the prize money policy does not necessarily make rich people richer, it does, of course, in a sense legitimate the wider structure of inequality on which the present pattern of horse-racing is based. Nevertheless, there are elements of illusion and reality in the belief in the percolation principle. Money does filter down but, of course, not in an equitable manner. In a contest based system of distribution some stables

Table 41 Proportion of Levy Board Current Expenditure going to Prize Money

Year	Total Current Expenditure £000	Prize Money Allocation £000	% to P.M.
1962/3	901.0	126.4	14
1963/4	1,832.8	642.6	35
1964/5	2,831.8	729.2	25.8
1965/6	2,044.8	751.4	36.7
1966/7	2,872.3	758.5	26.4
1967/8	2,749.9	716.3	26
1968/9	3,115.3	751.4	24.1
1969/70	3,514.2	1,594.5	45.4
1970/1	3,896.6	1,612.1	41.4
1971/2	4,168.7	1,824.4	43.8
1972/3	4,521.0	2,122.4	46.9
1973/4	4,983.5	2,214.3	44.4
1974/5	5,934.7	2,454.3	41.4
1975/6	6,946.1	3,294.6	47.4
1976/7	8,979.6	4,552.1	50.7
Total	59,384.8	25,144.5	42.3

Source: Adapted from Horserace Betting Levy Board, Racing Information Statistical Digest.

(and their connections) fare much better than others and this may have a self-reinforcing effect allowing the successful to remain successful through the attraction of richer owners and better horses and so on. Hence in such a system the distribution of rewards can become heavily skewed. That this was indeed the case, favouring a relatively small group of participants, was ably demonstrated by the notorious Economist Intelligence Unit report (1977)[70] which, with impeccable economic yardsticks, touched on a number of sensitive areas. It showed, for example, that in the 1975 Flat racing season the top twelve owners accounted for 22% of prize money. In other words, less than 0.5% of the owners accounted for at least a fifth of the available prize money. The same picture is accentuated in terms of trainers and jockeys: the top ten flat trainers accounted for a third of flat prize money: the sixteen most successful jockeys (10.4%) accounted for over two-thirds of the available prize money. The picture presented by jump racing is similar if less extremely disproportionate. On this basis it is difficult to recommend the efficiency of the percolation principle.

The prize money policy has reinforced the structure of rewards in the industry, one which fosters competition and individualism to the lowest ranks of the labour force. As was seen earlier, although some steps were made to shift the balance away from the pattern races, on the whole the Board has supported this differentiation and the whole folklore of the conventional wisdom of breeding (which it also supports, incidentally through the operation of the National Stud) on which it is based, with very little systematic scientific investigation of the validity of its assumptions. The renewed case for a pattern race system was produced by the Duke of Norfolk's Pattern of Racing Committee set up in 1965 which made recommendations for the staging of certain kinds of events with the appropriate prize money through

the racing year and in the main oriented to re-affirming the position of the middle distance horses as the 'ideal horse' (Mortimer, 1979). The Levy Board seemed to support this position without reservation which could be seen to belie the emphasis on maximising the levy because the quality of the horses has very little to do with the propensity to bet on the event. The extent to which the Levy Board continues to maintain the financial weighting in favour of the pattern races may clearly be seen from Table 42. While the increased volume of prize money as a whole has meant that the proportion of the Board's expenditure going to the pattern races has declined somewhat, the proportion of total pattern race money contributed by the Board has increased marginally.

The effects on the control of racing from the intervention of the Levy Board then are by no means clear cut. The power of the Jockey Club has been mediated, it is no longer master of its own house, but equally some aspects of the structure of racing have been reinforced. While something of a rapprochement has marked relations of late, it seems clear that the struggle for power will continue, if less overtly. In its submission to the Royal Commission, the Levy Board suggested that it required more control over the fixture list, the running of racecourses and their contribution to prize money. With stark frankness the Board stated that:

> "The Board's powers of control over the future development of horseracing are considerable, bearing in mind the use that can be made of its full control over the levy, without with the horseracing industry could not survive. The industry must indeed recognise that the increasing importance of the levy to horseracing may necessitate a commensurate strengthening of these powers of control."
>
> (Horserace Betting Levy Board, 1976)[71]

Table 42 Pattern Race Prize Money and Total Prize M

Year	Total Prize Money	Total Pattern Prize Money	Prize Money to Pattern Races	Proportion of Proportion of Prize Money contributed by Levy Board	Proportion of Levy Board contribution to Pattern Race Money going to Pattern Races	Proportion of Pattern to Total number of Flat Races
	£000	£000	%	%	%	%
1975	5,117.8	1,693.7	33.1	27.7	26.8	3.3
1976	6,990.4	2,136.8	30.6	30.1	20.1	3.3
1977	8,306.4	2,522.9	30.4	29.3	19.9	3.4
1978	10,392.1	2,943.1	28.3	31.6	17.5	3.3
1979	11,366.4	3,332.3	29.3	31.0	17.9	3.4

Source: Adapted from The Racing Industry Statistical Bureau, Statistics, 1975-1979

The Integrity of Racing

The evolution of the morality of racing has been a slow and uneven development. Advances in the integrity of racing have tended to take place in short spurts of activity interspersed between periods of dormancy disturbed, in the more distant past, only by some public scandal. In the past two decades or so, there have also been some dramatic advances in racing integrity but these appear to be the outcome of the sustained intervention of the Levy Board in this area. This intervention has been informed by the assumption that the health of the betting industry and therefore of the levy depends, among other things, on a general perception that the betting medium, i.e. racing, is, to all intents and purposes, 'straight'. As was pointed out earlier, there is room for doubt about the validity of this assumption but it is one which, pertinently, also appears to be shared by the bookmakers.

Although the optimistic hope was expressed that increased levels of prize money would eliminate the need for trainers to bet and thus eradicate a potential source of 'fiddling'[72], generally speaking, the weight of intervention has been placed on the provision and underwriting of all the technical paraphernalia of the modern race meeting and support services. These attempt to ensure as far as possible that the contests are fair and that miscreants are brought swiftly to heel. Limited film patrol and photo-finish equipment was in use before 1960 but the extension and increasing sophistication of these facilities, together with additional services such as starting stalls, independent racecourse security, efficient dope testing and monitoring arrangements and controls such as employee registration, stem directly from the intervention of the Levy Board. Revenue for these functions has consistently accounted for about 10% of annual current

expenditure. This is channelled through the agents of the Board in this area, Racecourse Technical Services and Racecourse Security Services, both of which are Levy Board subsidiaries. It has already been noted that the setting up of the security service was hedged about with some controversy. Interestingly, Marks (1972) suggests that Wigg's resolve to set up an independent service was strengthened by the bargaining over the 1972 Levy scheme which the bookmakers finally accepted as a quid pro quo for more effective security.

There have always been pressures from within racing to increase regulation though the authorities have usually been slow to respond. However, the current generation of innovations largely appear to stem from the concerns of a state agency to give further support to the stability of the betting industry.

The Racecourses

The development of the enclosed racecourse was a major sporting innovation of the later nineteenth century but their commercial vitality lasted little more than half a century. It is clear that they were in decline well before 1960. Their perilous financial status and the decrepid condition of their capital assets was noted by the Peppiatt Committee. The fear of the effects on the racecourses of the legalisation of off-course betting was to a large extent justified but it also merely accerlerated a trend of declining attendances and fortunes which was already established. Indeed, paradoxically, the 1960 legislation and the creation of the Levy Board provided perhaps the only means whereby the condition of the racecourses could be improved. Inevitably, the price paid for this was a degree of rationalisation and a lack of independence. The majority are now non-profit making organisations or trusts and their continued survival depends on the

attitude of the Jockey Club which licences them and the Levy Board which subsidises them.

The raceourses have been supported in a large number of ways, but most importantly through the prize money scheme itself and direct grants for the improvement of racecourses. Since the Levy Board made prize money available from its revenue there have been marked changes in the relative contributions to prize money as can be seen from Table 43. The contribution of owners (through stakes, entry fees, etc.) has declined but has hovered around 29% during the 1960's and 1970's. The share of the racecourses has plummeted from 63.7% (flat) and 44.6% (jumping) in 1961/62 to a combined figure of 16.8% in 1976, a decline which has been quite relentless. The bulk of the shortfall has been made up by the Levy Board which has raised its contribution from 14% in 1963 to 45.8% in 1976. By 1979 this had risen to 52.5% and the situation reached whereby sponsors were actually contributing more to racing than the courses which staged it.

Assistance to racecourses through improvement grants and loans has also been substantial and has accounted for around 25% of the Board's annual current expenditure. As early as 1963 the Board identified a need for a rolling modernisation and rationalisation scheme which also led to the closure of a number of unviable racecourses.[73] The early policy of the Board had, in fact, been criticised for failing to encourage attendances through reduced admission charges (Mortimer, 1979) and nearly two decades later the Royal Commission questioned whether enough was being done for spectators. However, there is a growing realisation that enhancing racing as a betting revenue generating medium, also requires support for the spectacle itself and maintaining spectator interest. This is because the health of the off-course market depends to a certain extent on there being a strong on-course betting

Table 43 Relative Contributions to Total Prize Money

Year	Total Prize Money	Levy Board	Owners	Sponsors	Racecourses
	£000	%	%	%	%
1961	2,791.0	-	36.8	4.5	58.7
1962	2,789.9	-	37.2	7.2	55.6
1963	3,488.3	16.4	31.0	7.2	45.5
1964	3,663.9	19.2	33.1	7.5	40.2
1965	3,863.3	19.4	28.0	9.0	43.6
1966	3,936.5	19.0	28.4	9.1	43.6
1967	3,801.3	19.0	27.7	8.5	44.8
1968	3,962.1	19.5	29.6	8.9	42.0
1969	4,794.6	30.3	29.6	7.0	33.2
1970	4,973.8	32.0	30.3	7.6	30.1
1971	5,317.7	33.2	29.9	9.8	27.2
1972	6,112.2	32.0	30.0	12.5	26.4
1973	6,720.7	33.1	30.6	15.2	26.1
1974	7,053.4	33.8	31.4	15.0	19.8
1975	7,625.6	36.5	30.8	13.7	19.0
1976	9,956.5	45.8	25.2	12.3	16.8
1977	1,1822.5	47.1	24.4	12.6	15.9
1978	14,546.9	53.6	23.1	11.8	11.5
1979	16,026.5	52.5	24.0	12.7	10.7

Source: Adapted from Horserace Betting Levy Board, Racing Statistical Information Digest and The Racing Industry Statistic Bureau, Statistics, 1975-1979.

The rounding up on individual calculations means that the Percentage rows do not add up exactly to 100%. In addition, from 1961-1966, the figures for jump racing were based on the season not the calendar year. In adjusting for the calendar year there is some minimal double counting but this is not such as to distort the overall figures.

market where the starting price returns are established. Otherwise the on-course market will be over-susceptible to manipulation by off-course bookmakers, lowering returns and reducing the attractiveness of this against other betting media. It is in the economic interests of the Board in this light, to improve racing also as a spectator sport though much yet remains to be done in this respect.

Nevertheless, it would be difficult to overestimate the impact of the Board on this essential racing facility and to preserving what for many is the unique feature of British racing, namely its diversity and variety.

The Labour Force and Employment Relationships

The entanglement of the state in racing in the guise of the Levy Board has in one respect also met with a certain embarrassment. This is namely that, traditionally, racing has been founded on a substructure of super-exploitation and archaic employment and business practices. As was noted earlier, this situation had not gone totally unchallenged by the workforce but despite some trade union organisation little had changed by the time of the appearance of the Levy Board. Many of the old features persist but the rate of change has increased somewhat since that event. In fact, there is a history of the state seeking to protect itself from accusations of aiding and abbetting exploitation. In 1891, for example, legislation was enacted giving protection to workers employed by companies engaged on government contracts. While it has not acted hastily, the Levy Board has continued in this tradition with respect to the racing industry.

By far the most dramatic intervention occurred during the 1975 stable lads' strike which was discussed in Chapter Eight. The settlement of the

dispute through the offices of A.C.A.S.S. was decisively influenced by the leverage of the Levy Board. As it became clear that the dispute would fester for some time, the Levy Board announced that an extra £1 million prize money would be made available in the following year. Pressure from the owners on the trainers to settle, already heavy, intensified. The trainers also were not inclined to let such an opportunity slip. From their point of view, however, there were also unpleasant strings attached to the offer. This was that it was conditional on the establishment of national minimum wage negotiation machinery which would further establish trade unionism in the industry. It was precisely the prevention of such a development, conversely, which had been at the root of the employers' strategy during the dispute. Nevertheless, the carrot was too large to neglect and such machinery was duly initiated and its judgements on the minimum wage for stable staff are protected by the considerable force of the Rules of Racing.

Interestingly, this proposal was linked in the Board's offer to the establishment of minimum training fees. While the competitive individualism of the trainers led them to resist such a move, the venture was finally obstructed by the Office of Fair Trading. The Board was forced to settle for a recommendation of minimum fees by the National Trainers' Federation and the registration with the Jockey Club of agreements between trainers and owners. Nevertheless, these developments represent considerable changes in the employment and business procedures of the industry.

The weakness of the 'percolation principle' embodied in the prize money scheme has already been discussed. Until 1969 this was further circumscribed by the voluntary nature of the 'present' system which meant that whether increased bonuses and presents were made as a result of increased levels of prize money, was entirely subject to the whim of

employers. In 1968, however, the Board announced a scheme of compulsory deductions from prize money to be paid to stable employees as of right, presently at the rate of 5%. There was early evidence of abuse of the system by employers and following pressure from the Board, the Jockey Club laid down tighter procedures for the distribution of the 'pool' to which only registered stable employees are entitled. The method of distribution is in principle subject to agreement of the employees.

This step seems to have contradictory implications for employment relations. On the one hand, it has led to the gradual bureaucratisation of the 'gift' relationship whereby a contractual relation has supplanted an arbitrary, paternalistic one. This means that one of the pillars of paternalism and deferential interaction in this social structure is being undermined. On the other hand, it has merely reinforced the internal pattern of inequality in the industry and has tended to aid employee/employer identity in the more successful enterprises, fostering rivalry between outfits in the main training centres and by the same token supporting divisions and rivalries in the workforce. This, of course, has implications for the problem of worker solidarity which is discussed in Chapter Eight. The Board has made a number of other interventions in respect of the workforce concerning insurance, pensions, safety and training which have served at least to improve the image of racing as a 'respectable' industry. The Board's activities in respect of the labour force then have been far-reaching, if their implications still have to be fully witnessed, but the changes it had wrought in this as in other spheres would have been difficult to predict in 1960.

Concluding Remarks

The preceding discussion of the Levy Board and racing has shown that the tentacles of the Board reach into some of the unlikeliest interstices of the industry. Indeed the breadth of the impact of the Levy Board would have been very difficult to predict from a reading of the legislation alone. It has also been seen, however, that the question of the control of racing was affected by a finely woven set of relationships involving the state and private interests in two distinct, if related, sectors. First then we will return to consider briefly the theoretical questions raised by this situation.

By any standard there appears to be a strong elective affinity between the interests of two state bureaucracies, the Horserace Betting Levy Board and the Treasury, the interests of private capital in bookmaking and of the racing industry. Indeed, there seems a case for suggesting that the Levy Board, the Treasury and the monopoly wing of the bookmaking industry in particular, are locked into a cycle of mutual dependence with a common interest in healthy accumulation in bookmaking. It is equally clear, however, that mutual relations between the Levy Board, the bookmakers and racing, have all been seriously conflictful from time to time. Additionally, although the large bookmaking firms subsequently formed an interest organisation[74], there is very little evidence to suggest that they were capable of exercising collective pressure on the Levy Board in the critical period of the mid to late 1970's, even if they were aware of their own best interests. The Jockey Club, in the first instance, also seemed to be the reluctant handmaiden to the policies of the Board.

There are evidently a number of elements in this situation which could be well explained by the neo-Marxist framework outlined at the beginning of the chapter. The Levy Board, for example, may be seen as formulating and

pursuing a collective capitalist interest vis-a-vis bookmaking (and a collective interest at least vis-a-vis racing) one which the industry itself seemed incapable of realising by its own efforts. Such an interest appears to have developed independently without undue influence from empirical capitalist interests and hence may be termed 'managerialist'. In Offe's (1975) terms, such a strategy would also constitute a 'productive' policy, a response to a putative situation rather than, as in the case of 'allocative' policies, a response to given empirical demands or pressures. The interests of capital are served by this stage agency while at the same time it remains operationally independent of real capitalist interests. The situation described also seems to offer some support for the state which is important in many neo-Marxist discussion. The fiscal involvement of the Treasury after 1965 meant that the state had a real interest in the maintenance and improvement of favourable conditions for accumulation in bookmaking. In this light the Levy Board could be seen as the agency of the state in monitoring at least some of these conditions. This case seems to provide an example of Offe's rather cryptic observation that policies which superficially have little to do with private accumulation (such as those of the Levy Board) may in fact implicitly embody the requirement for stability in that process.

There are, however, some features of the situation which do not completely accord with this account. As was suggested earlier, alluring and probable though the thesis may be, there is no obvious evidence that the Treasury had a formulated interest in the fiscal potential of betting either before the 1960 legislation or in a form which would have influenced the expansionist strategy of the Board later. It did, however, by example show the Levy Board how to cream betting revenues more effectively. Also, as was shown earlier, the Levy Board was essentially the child of 'politics' not managerial design.

Another problematic aspect is the 'expansionist' programme itself. Although similar ideas has been mooted earlier at the Levy Board, the positive development and determined execution of this policy was due largely to the forceful influence of one man, namely Lord Wigg. This is an uncomfortable observation for a sociological account let alone a Marxist one. Yet it does serve as a reminder that strategies of action are carried through by real people not structural forces. There is no evidence to suggest that Wigg's accession to the Levy Board chair was a 'strategic' appointment (i.e. designed to ensure the pursuit of certain policies) beyond normal executive patronage. An experienced politician, Wigg also had the benefit of a number of years as a member of the R.B.C.B. and was well versed in racing and betting matters. He clearly also held no particular brief for the bookmakers at that time and, in fact, the trough in relations between them and the Board occurred during his chairmanship. This is not, however, to advocate a great man theory of history. Wigg's biography merely gave him the wherewithal to articulate the tendencies which were already latent in the situation he inherited. His parliamentarianism meant that the statutes would be pursued to the legal limits and this would inevitably have meant a sharpening of policies premissed on the full potential of the legislation and a ready acknowledgement of the mutuality of interests in racing and betting.

From the theoretical point of view, it is evident that the often sweeping formulae of the neo-Marxist genre of state theorising needs to be tempered by a more detailed consideration of the personal and situational aspects of state intervention. With this important qualification, this approach does offer a useful framework for unearthing some rather obscure relationships. In particular, the kind of distinctions made by Offe, for example, unrefined as they are, give a useful starting point for analysis.

It was also found, however, that this state intervention also had a profound impact on the internal domain of racing which went some way beyond the intentions encrusted in the legislation regarding the 'improvement of horse-racing'. Considerable leverage was exercised over the racecourses, the integrity of racing, and employment relationships to take just three examples. The most important issue, however, concerned the question of racing control. There seems little doubt that the history of the first two decades of the Levy Board is the history of power struggle. This resulted, of course, from the impulsion of the Levy Board into strategic areas which had previously been the sole preserve of the Jockey Club, an institution not easily given to ready acceptance of sudden change, especially where its own organisation was concerned. Armed with the custom and practice of two hundred years and the knowledge that it had already successfully incorporated a state sponsored organisation in the form of the R.B.C.B., it was inevitable that the "traditional intelectuals" of the Jockey Club would both resent and resist this intrustion. Besides the overlapping of territory, central for the conflict between the Levy Board and the Jockey Club then was a difference in organisation style. Constituted on impeccable legal rational lines, reflective of its own organisational structure and embodying a rational purposive approach to policy formation with an emphasis on planning, the Levy Board was confronted by an organisation which still displayed the vestiges of patrimonialism and a penchant for unpredictability and arbitrary decision-making which that kind of administration implies.

As was seen, a process of rationalisation had been taking place in the operational substructure of the Jockey Club, an important means by which this institution has been able to survive. The increasing interpenetration of the administrative staffs of the Levy Board and the Jockey Club whereby

many important committees are serviced by both representatives of Weatherby's and the Board, will strengthen the process of rationalisation and may increase the pressure for paid officials, recruited and cultivated on the basis of achievement criteria, to head some of the strategic decision-making processes. This may result in a de facto differentiation within the organisation of the sort embodied in the distinction between the French Jockey Club and the Societe d'Encouragement. Conflict arising from this source is likely to decrease as the organisational styles of the two bodies coalesce and a closer abutment of administrative layers takes place.

At present something of a truce marks relations between the Board and the Jockey Club. It could be speculated that this is because the Levy Board has also developed an interest in its own organisational security which, in the light of the Royal Commission's recommendations for the diminution of the powers of both bodies, might be risked if the Levy Board is seen to seek public confrontation with the Jockey Club in the near future.

There remains, however, plenty of scope for conflict. The Levy Board would clearly like to exercise more control over the strategic areas which directly relate to its function of raising the levy. This much has been made explicit by successive Board chairmen. There is, however, one area which relates to how the levy revenue is spent which could, if taken up by the Board, seriously disturb relations. This is the structure of the prize money allocation which, as was seen, is weighted disproportionately in favour of the pattern races. From the point of view of raising the levy this schedule of expenditure is arguably irrelevant. There is little evidence that the quality of the animals, which is reasonably assumed to be higher in the pattern races, makes a difference to the propensity to bet on a race. The examples of Hong Kong and Australiasia show that phenomenal betting behaviour can

be associated with what is generally agreed is moderate racing. Some races of high status and many others of lesser status are popular with the betting public but this is partly a cultural phenomenon linked to the betting tradition and is not linked necessarily to the quality of the race. The Derby is an example of a popular and quality race, but the Lincoln, Ebor and Northumberland Plate, for example, all popular races, are handicaps. Whereas it makes sense from the point of view of betting interest to increase the notoriety of the popular events by disproportionate prize money grants, the same is not always true of the pattern races.

It could be argued that support for the pattern races comes under the heading of improving the quality of British bloodstock. However, this begs the considerable question of the validity of the whole folklore which supports the rationality of the breeding business, for which there is little scientific evidence. Given the Levy Board's stewardship of the National Stud, it might have been expected that some systematic investigation would be undertaken to test the validity of assumptions made by breeders but none yet appears to be forthcoming. To do so and to question the pride of place given to the pattern races would, of course, represent a direct challenge to dominant commercial interests and the whole power structure of the industry. So far the Board has been unwilling to do so. It is not altogether inconceivable, however, that this issue will be raised because it is strongly connected with the problem of the highly skewed nature of rewards in the industry from which only a few benefit. It remains to be seen, however, whether in fact, this nettle will be grasped by the Board.

One final point may be discussed at this juncture. The Levy Board's activities are premised fundamentally on the association of the British working class betting tradition with racing. It seems evident, however, that

in its two decades of existence, the Board has paid very little explicit attention to the interests of the off-course cash punter or to asking what those interests might be. For most of that period it has concerned itself with servicing the interests of producer groups in the racing and bookmaking industries. However, if it is to continue in this role and to preserve the status quo and the position of racing in British recreational life, it must at the same time be careful, through the effects of its policies, not to unhinge this traditional relationship between the working class and horserace betting.

While these comments are speculative, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the Board, unwittingly, may have sewn the seed of such a process. In developing the betting medium and helping to provide conditions for successful accumulation in bookmaking, the Board has enabled the bookmakers to find themselves in a situation where they have been able to more fully develop other betting and gaming media to rival that of horseracing. An obvious example is the sponsorship by bookmakers of greyhound racing and meetings staged during betting office opening hours to supplement evening meetings which have been relatively popular since the 1920's.[75] Bookmakers now also offer odds on any range of sporting and non-sporting events. In addition, to the extent that levy demands increase, further encouragement will be given to the development of alternative media on which there are no levy payments. While there are no obvious signs as yet that horserace betting is likely to decrease relative to other forms of gambling, it cannot be assumed that its pre-eminent place will remain unaffected by the entrepreneurial zeal of gambling promoters or other voracious purveyors of commercialised leisure.

In sum, the Levy Board occupies a pivotal position in the relationship between racing and important elements in its economic and social

environment. It has articulated both with the internal organisation of racing, even down to the sphere of employment relations and with the betting industry and betting tradition in working class culture.

Notes and References

1. The Report states that the Commission probably received as much evidence on racing as on all other matters put together. Royal Commission on Gambling 1978, p. 75.

2. This process is well described by Khan (1980). The formation of B.R.I.C. (Bloodstock and Racing Industries Confereration) as a spokesman organisation for a wide range of interests in 1974 symbolises this process.

3. Two of the more important of these, for example, were the Benson Report 1968 and the Blackwell Report 1974. The former proposed some radical reforms for the organisation of racing while the latter was a more superficial study of manpower needs in the industry.

4. Ironically the hierarchy of interests to be represented included stable workers but not their employers.

5. Additional recommendations concerned closing loopholes which allowed some levy contributions to 'escape' and the liability of V.A.T. on certain transactions.

6. See, for example, the comments of Lord Howard de Walden, senior steward of the Jockey Club, Sporting Life, 17.7.78.

7. Principally through the notion of 'overloaded government'.

8. Symptomatic here perhaps is Poulantzas' notion that the state is a 'condensate' of class relations.

9. For a cynical view of this genre see Parkin (1979).

10. This concept, of course, has been the subject of a great deal of criticism, see for example Hirst (1977), and also appears in at least three different meanings in the literature.

11. A similar complaint is made by Forest and Lloyd (1978) concerning the use of 'theoretical sledgehammers' in policy research.

12. The schools of urban political economy and the Frankfurt structuralists are notable here.

13. James O'Connor "The Fiscal Crisis of the State" (1973) is, of course, emblematic in this respect.

14. Offe points out that the decision modes available to the state all have severe limitations hence there is a contradiction at the heart of the state between the necessary functions of the state and the means for carrying them out.

15. See for example, the work of Hargreaves (1975), Taylor (1971) and Brohm (1978).

16. Horserace Betting Levy Board Fifteenth Report, 1976.

17. Horserace Betting Levy Board, Racing Information Statistical Digest, 1980.

18. According to McKibbin (1979), the presiding judge, Lord Halsbury, was well known as a 'sporting judge'.

19. Pool betting, on contrast to starting price betting, involves the central pooling of all stakes which are then resdistributed to winning bets according to fixed criteria. For example, 50% may be allocated to winning bets, 30% to successful place bets with 20% being retained by the house. The sum available to be distributed to winning bets is divided by the number of individual winning units to provide the given odds. The main difference from S.P. betting as far as the punter is concerned is that the given odds are not known at the time of placing the bet.

20. The belief that money staked on horse-racing somehow belongs to racing persists strongly today. The fallacious assumptions on which this belief is based were also commented upon by the Royal Commission in 1978.

21. Quoted by Mortimer (1979, p. 3).

22. The National Hunt Committee was the controlling body of National Hunt racing until it amalgamated with the Jockey Club in 1970. Hood (1970) describes it as the 'alter ego' of the Jockey Club.

    This is any event was the belief of Lord Wigg, a long time members of the R.B.C.B. (personal interview, 28.6.78.). See also Lord Wigg's evidence to the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries, 2nd Report, The Horserace Totalisator Board 1976. An interesting insight into the 'cluby' modus operandi of the R.B.C.B. during its early years is given by Mortimer (1979) himself a member of the secretariat of the Board during the interwar years.

23. The minimum stake remained the same (2/-s) from 1929-1957.

24. Calculated from the Annual Reports of the R.B.C.B.

25. In 1930, a private company, Tote Investors Ltd., was formed to accept credit bets for inclusion in racecourse Totalisator pools. Vamplew (1976) notes that by the late 1930's its business amounted to only 3% of Tote turnover.

26. Much to the delight of the Sporting Life which exposed the operations, during 1977 the Tote was found to have been doctoring dividends to make them more comparable to S.P. returns. Unfortunately for the Tote this was not strictly legal. Bookmaker antagonism towards the Tote was also exhibited in opposition to Tote Investors Ltd., the 1972 legislation, and the authority fee to bet at Tote odds - a privilege which most of the large bookmakers have now relinquished.

27. For example, this is embodied in the terms of reference of the important Pattern of Racing Committee (1965) and in remarks made by the Jockey Club to the 1949 Royal Commission on Gambling. Some extraordinary lengths have been taken in pursuit of this principle, most eccentrically by the 'Jersey Act' of 1909. This piece of Jockey Club legislation immediately rendered most American bloodstock 'halfbreeds'.

The Jersey Act specifications for the eligibility of horses for entry in the General Stud Book remained in force until 1949.

28. In fact, there was some overlap of membership in the respective hierarchies but the principle of differentiation is important.

29. In this century, for example, the authority of the Jockey Club was tested in the courts in 1931, 1948 and 1966. Only in the latter case where the court failed to uphold the Jockey Club's right to exclude females from holding a trainer's licence, was the challenge successful.

30. 'Warning Off' literally meant to be warned not to trespass on Newmarket Heath. While the old phrase persists, the official term nowadays is to be "a Prohibited Person".

31. Relations with the Irish authorities were particularly strained following the suspension of two leading Irish trainers in 1953 and 1957 and again in 1980 when Irish jockeys were harshly suspended for their use of the whip.

32. For example, Robert Sangster, Sir Rex Cohen, Sir Charles Clore, Sir Freddie Laker, and one exception, Sir Arnold Weinstock.

33. See, for example, the accounts in Runciman (1889), and the Contemporary Review, 1873. The Contemporary Review seems to have been somewhat jaundiced in its attitude to racing.

34. See anonymous author of an article in the Quarterly Review, 1883.

35. Vamplew (1976) notes that the Jockey Club was far less reluctant to institute proceedings in cases of severe malpractice in the interwar period. In the recent post-war years, the police have been more active in investigating racing malpractice when it appears to involve fraud. A number of large betting coups in recent years have made the bookmakers very sensitive to the plea of 'fraud', the only basis on which they properly refuse to pay.

36. A re-submission to a Royal Commission is a rare and odd event. The Jockey Club's original submission which broadly endorsed the status quo, was clearly unacceptable to the Commission. This feeling appears to have been picked up by the Jockey Club, initiating a re-think on the Club's position. The second submission outlined proposals which were not dissimilar to those of the Benson Report, recommending a single authority to control racing and the levy. While the spirit of the submission changed, the Commission explicitly rejected the conflation of spending and collecting functions via the levy in one organisation.

37. The lack of novelty of these arguments is also commented upon by O. Fletcher (editor of the Sporting Life) in a submission to the Royal Commission, 1978.

38. See the Report on the Churches Council on Gambling, 1957.

39. Private Members Bill introduced by Sir Eric Errington.

40. Historically, gamblers have shown a marked disregard for the corruptness of various gambling media as the patronage of the

eighteenth century lotteries in Britain and the 'numbers racket' in urban America, for example, testifies. However, one has to take into account the degree of choice open to the punter for alternative forms of gambling activity. In the American urban, working class neighbourhood controlled by the 'mob', for example, the numbers racket was perhaps the only readily available form open to punters. One can hypothesise, however, that given freedom of choice, punters will, other things being equal, prefer a medium which is 'straight'. An exception to this might be found as in the note below.

41. Some forms of manipulation are strictly speaking illegitimate but accepted as routine in racing such as, for example, the placing of a horse in races to which it is known by its handlers to be unsuited in order to cover up the form. However, unearthing such strategies may be an additional and attractive device to 'sussing the form' for some punters. This form of manipulation is qualitatively different from 'doping', for example, in the face of which everyday punters are helpless.

42. Lord Harding, the first chairman of the Board, suggested as early as 1963 that increasing the number of fixtures was the key to increasing the volume of the levy. See Report of the Churchs Council on Gambling (1963), p. 37.

43. For the purposes of calculation of the levy, bookmakers are grouped into ten categories according to turnover with a different rate of levy applicable to each category. The bookmaker really acts as a collector of taxes as the levy is paid on stakes not on profits and in practice forms part of the deductions from winnings.

44. Interestingly, this situation was, in a somewhat ironic tone predicted by the Peppiatt Committee which was "not convinced that in the end means would not be found to pass on at least a part of it directly to backers".

45. See for example, the article by Lord Wigg in The Times, 25.7.70.

46. This was also suggested by Lord Wigg in a personal interview with the author, 28.6.78.

47. This is broadly indicated by the trend of Licensed Betting Office acquisition of the 'big four' bookmakers.

Table 44 Betting Offices owned by the Big Four, 1962-77

	1962	1965	1968	1971	1975	1977
Ladbrokes	-	-	218	660	1,131	956
William Hill	-	-	90	294	828	969
Corals	23	149	234	404	634	589
Mecca	-	-	-	448	778	651
Big Four total	23	149	542	1,806	3,371	3,165
All Betting Offices	13,340	15,638	15,782	14,462	£14,837	13,254
Percentage of Big Four to all betting offices	0.2	1.0	3.4	12.5	22.7	23.9

Source: Royal Commission on Gambling, 1978, Table 6.3, p. 27.

48. An important mediating factor here was the expansion of televised mid-week racing for which many punters combined opportunities to bet and to partake of the entertainment intrinsic to the activity.

49. Following 'failure to agree' between the Board and the Bookmakers' Committee, nearly 50% of the levy schemes have been effectively imposed - before 1969 - by the 'independent' members of the Board and since then by the Home Secretary.

50. In what was widely seen as a rap over the knuckles for the bookmakers following their less than wholehearted co-operation over the 7th Levy Scheme, further legislation was enacted which, among other things, gave licensing magistrates power to refuse to renew licences to bookmakers who failed to discharge their obligations to the Levy Board.

51. This was not resolved until 1982 when the levy was fixed at a point roughly halfway between the demands of the Levy Board and the negotiating position of the bookmakers.

52. Some light may be shed on this when the relevant state papers become available. However, Hood (1970) does note that in the 1920's at least, the Treasury was far keener on a betting tax than the Customs and Excise Department which would be responsible for collecting it.

53. Especially in the field of labour law, for example, Health and Safety.

54. In the sense of the term outlined by Winkler (1977) for example.

55. The Tote never accounted for more than 3% of turnover before 1960.

56. Horserace Betting Levy Board, First Report, September, 1963.

57. See Marks (1972).

58. Quoted by Marks (1972, p. 8).

59. Lord Wigg gives a colourful account of this event, most of which it is wise not to repeat. Interview with Lord Wigg 28.6.78.

60. As indeed it was charged in the legislation.

61. The Levy Board, for example, had already instituted a 'Forward Planning' section in its organisation.

62. Khan (1980), for exarnple, observes that a virtual warning to the Levy Board over fixtures appeared in the Racing Calendar as early as 1963.

63. This episode is vividly portrayed by Marks (1972).

64. Levy Board officials also sit on the respective Jockey Club Committees, for example.

65. Quoted in the Sporting Life, 21.12.77.

66. In the same article, Plummer is quoted as saying "I find it very difficult to decide whether or not to take this latest piece of (Jockey Club) evidence seriously". Sporting Life, 21.12.77.

67. Horserace Betting Levy Board, First Report, September, 1963.

68. Lord Wigg in an article in The Times, 25.7.70.

69. Levy Board Record, July 1977.

70. This report was commissioned by the Jockey Club in order to support its claim that more prize money was the answer to many of racing's problems. Unfortunately, the report reached the reverse conclusion and was consequently roundly condemned by the authorities as 'unpalatable', 'amateurish', 'rushed' and 'superficial'.

71. Horserace Betting Levy Board, Submission to the Royal Commission on Gambling, 1978, also quoted by the Royal Commission, Vol. 1., p. 91.

72. Lord Wigg, The Times, 25.7.70., expressed the view that higher levels of prize money would obviate the necessity of trainers needing to bet in order to survive, a situation which inevitably causes 'manipulation' and 'fiddling'.

73. Horserace Betting Levy Board, Annual Report, September 1963.

74. The Betting Offices Licencees Association (B.O.L.A.) of which, ironically, Lord Wigg subsequently became chairman.

75. Interestingly, however, in August 1982, the Sporting Life carried reports of a downturn in greyhound betting turnover and attendances at meetings.

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will summarise the findings of the substantive inquiries into the different aspects of racing discussed in the thesis in the context of the concerns outlined in Chapter One. The methodological strategy adopted implied that the study ranged over both general and specific issues in relation to racing in order that the analysis of each might inform that of the other. Only in this way, it is argued, is it possible to begin to achieve some purchase on the totality of the phenomenon in question, even if this procedure ultimately also involves a high degree of selectiveness. Hence, the study has engaged two major areas of articulation between racing and the wider society, namely the role of racing in upper class sociability and the role of racing in working class culture mediated through the betting tradition. Investigation then focused on a particular dimension of the internal world of racing, that is the important area of the social production of the thoroughbred racehorse, the basic resource around which the social world of racing is constructed. Considerable attention was also given to the problematic of control in racing administration. It was evident that germane to any such consideration was the issue of the emergence of state intervention in racing in recent years. The latter provided a key site in the organisation and politics of racing and performed an important role in the structuring of the production and consumption of betting. In this sense it may also be seen as an important area in straddling the boundaries between racing and the wider society.

A number of recent changes in the social organisation and environment

of racing have been noted in this thesis. Indeed it is inevitable that any close investigation of a social institution with as complex a history as horse-racing, will point to some degree of change. The danger is that observers may be prone to dramatise the changes witnessed relative to the evident stability of the phenomenon over time. The racing contributors to the Quarterly Review in the last decades of the nineteenth century mentioned earlier for example, were convinced of the radical nature of the developments in the commercial organisation of racing in their era. In a sense they were correct. The emergence of the enclosed race meeting operating on commercial principles and the corresponding eclipse of the 'social' race meeting was indeed an important process. Equally, this phenomenon could be considered an outgrowth of commercial interests in racing, present at least since entrepreneurs began to exploit the potential of the railways for leisure purposes. The tendency to emphasise change operates at different levels. Cunningham (1980) indicates, for example, that a feature of the 'new' social history with its commitment to the investigation of popular culture, is its tendency to exaggerate the role of change and conflict at the expense of continuity in culture. Change thus impresses more easily that stability.

It should be registered therefore that in terms of its outward forms, at least, the remarkable aspect of racing in Britain is that it has indeed shown a considerable degree of continuity. A number of its characteristic appearances can be mentioned briefly. Perhaps the most obvious if superficial continuity, concerns racing's most prestigious body, the Jockey Club, which persists is as an emblem of 'gentrified' upper class culture. Membership is primarily honorific rather than functional and is supplied by recognisably equivalent social strata as a century ago. While the world of finance and the 'tycoonish' elements of commerce are better represented, the

membership still reflects a resistance to purveyors of business rationality untamed by the experience or anticipation of gentility. There has been considerable movement in the administrative substratum of the organisation towards rational principles of operation, but disciplinary procedures and the 'legal' status of racing participants vis-a-vis the Jockey Club continue, among other elements, to reflect the patrimonial legacy.

While there seems to be some evidence that the sphere of domestic production in racing has expanded in recent years, the pinnacles of achievement and rewards are still largely concentrated around existing embodiments of wealth and high social status. To take another, related level, the major events of the racing calendar, the five classic races and many of the wider number of 'listed' races which account for the major rewards, have a history which spans two centuries. By the same token, the historical wisdom on the ideal characteristics of the thoroughbred has been preserved and indeed has recently been made more explicit. While many traditional meetings have been lost with racecourse closures and so on, the structure of the flat racing calendar with its provisions and safeguards for different kinds of races, continues to echo past assumptions. The structure of two year old racing, for example, following the clamp down on the excesses of the 1880's, has remained virtually unchanged for almost a century. In 1879 the proportion of two year old races was 39.7%. Exactly a century later in 1979 it had become 37.8%!

It has been cogently argued that in recent years a new orientation towards procuring and servicing owners, has emerged among a certain type of racehorse trainer (Khan, 1980). However, the overall relationship between trainers and owners has altered little since the trainer emerged from hardly more than the status of groom in the early nineteenth century. This

relationship may be characterised as one of oligarchic patronage, a form of dependence which once characterised the traditional professions but has all but disappeared from contemporary economic relations. Hence, scarcely even the most able and successful of trainers are able to claim complete independence of practice and decision making in the conduct of their business. Many important decisions in the management of a horse's career are frequently required to be made in consultation with the owner. Most contemporary trainers continue to experience stewardship without autonomy. The emergent independence of the traditional professional was associated with the growing heterogeneity of a middle class clientele. Khan's data would seem to indicate some movement in this direction but the continuing relative exclusivity of racing ownership suggests that a radical change in the trainer's status will be a hesitant development.

A further continuing feature of British racing which contributes to both its apparent uniqueness and its economic fragility at the level of spectacle, is its diversity and de-centralised format. The number of racecourses has been severely reduced over time but so far initiatives towards centralisation or bifurcation on the lines of 'international rivals', such as North America and France, have been resisted. This allows racing to maintain an image of a spectator sport but also serves to reproduce the pattern of economic and political dependence established in recent years. A good deal more space could be given to these themes but these are sufficient to advise caution in an emphasis on change at the expense of continuity.

It is also necessary to guard against over-simplifying a complex picture. Nevertheless, the analysis of the four main areas considered in the study, namely: racing and elite culture; horserace betting and working class culture; the production of the racehorse; and the political dimension of control,

indicates that a number of important developments have occurred in both the internal domain and external environment of racing. It is also clear that these, together with the potential which has been indicated for more change, will affect the overall cultural status of the activity in Britain. Some of the factors responsible for these developments are outside the control of the racing world but the study has shown that others have been generated within the world of racing and betting itself. In a sense, racing has exaccerbated conditions under which its place in a set of cultural practices, with their implications for class imagery and identity, has become more tenuous. If it would overstate the case to say that racing has generated its own contradictions, it has surely created some trenchant dilemmas for itself.

The following general conclusions then seem evident from the study. The discussion at the level of socio-historical analysis showed first, the historically vibrant role of racing in elite culture to be somewhat attenuated. In fact, its role in upper class culture, as indicated by the participation and leisure patterns of a core upper class group, the corporate economic elite, a group which is known historically to have successfully assimilated traditional and new wealth, could be said to be rather marginal. Racing now competes with a growing number of alternative practices capable of reaffirming upper class identity in sociable contexts. Its marginalisation within this culture together with its greater social inclusivity, have served to moderate the elitist overtones of racing though these do remain in evidence. Participation in racing may be still a typically upper class pastime in the sense that such people are over-represented but the upper class do not typically participate in racing.. Whatever the case historically, there appear to be few grounds for believing that racing is anything but of the most marginal significance for the proximate structuration of the upper class.

Secondly, the parallel analysis of working class culture showed and offered an explanation for, the existence of a strong betting tradition within the working class focused on racing. This tradition, however, also seems likely to move to a more marginal position within working class culture. In this it is propelled by both external developments such as the increased possibilities for leisure expenditure and by factors generated by the political economy of the betting and gambling industry. Hence the attraction of the upper and working class towards a common recreational focus so frequently celebrated in historical commentary, shows evident signs of weakening. It can be observed here, however, that the analysis also showed the relative institutional separation of working class betting from upper class interests, despite this common focus.

A key role in the formation of the working class betting tradition was played by the state, the activities of which occupied a good deal of attention in a third area considered. Indeed after 1960, the state in the guise of the Levy Board, played an active, if unreflective, part in the structuring of the production and consumption of betting. Ironically the effects of its strategies can be seen as working to unhinge off course horserace betting as a distinctively working class institution. The state may thus be seen as occupying a pivotal space between racing and the wider environment both in terms of its articulation with the betting tradition and in terms of its reverberations for the organisation of racing itself. If the Levy Board served unwittingly to underwrite a process of rationalisation in the betting industry, it did much the same with respect to racing, reinforcing other factors which have tended to erode the distinctive cultural output of racing. This was seen most clearly at the level of control of racing, in policy disputes and in the clash between different styles of organisation and in the emergence of a more bureaucratic approach.

The remaining important area of investigation, the productive core of the industry, was approached through survey, observational and interview procedures. It was felt that this could most usefully be done given the resources available, through an in-depth study of a crucial occupational role, that of the stable worker. Somewhat perversely, this implied the 'suspension' of the contribution and ideology of the trainer and other groups and their interrelationships. Though general information was available about these, this remains a limitation. Nevertheless, it was possible to gain some important insights into developments at this level of the racing world in recent years. It was clear that the Levy Board had also penetrated this sphere of activity but had done no more than reinforce general trends towards the bureaucratisation of employment relations, rationalisation of work practices and erosion of traditionalism in the context of economic difficulties. While local in nature, such difficulties seem to have been more or less general to the industry at the time.

Overall, then, two broad processes have converged in recent years. On the one hand, at the more general level, the distinctive cultural allegiance of separate groups to racing has become attenuated; on the other hand at the more specific level, the meanings generated by the practice itself have begun a move towards greater alignment with more general social norms.

Given the wide-ranging scope of the investigation, however, it will be apposite at this point to qualify these stark conclusions with a more detailed summary of the substantive observations of the study. This may usefully be done by first reconsidering the area of the state and control, working through the internal domain to the wider cultural connections.

A key area in the conduct of any social institution is that of the social process of control and it is precisely in this area that the most strategic developments have taken place in the past two decades or so. The emergent struggle for control reverberated through racing and generated a degree of political consciousness and activity virtually unknown to racing before. This culminated in the crescendo of political maneouvering which greeted the attention of the Royal Commission on Gambling in the mid-1970's. The immediate antecedent of this trend was the event of state intervention in the guise of the statutory Horserace Betting Levy Board, consequent upon the politics of the Gambling Legislation of 1960 in the context of the wider problematic of working class gambling. In explaining such events and the pattern and style of intervention which followed, recourse was made to distinctions and analyses implicit in the work of recent neo-Marxist writers, particularly in terms of the concepts of politics and managerialism as modes of state intervention. Hence, while the Levy Board could be seen as the child of the political negotiations of the Jockey Club in the context of allocatory functions of the state, it became evident under the manageralist regime of Lord Wigg in particular, that whatever its dubious paternity, the infant sorely lacked parental control. In its adolescence the Board has continued to assert a strident independence while eschewing a path of open antagonism. While neo-Marxist analyses have tended to ride roughshod over empirical detail and, indeed, a number of awkward considerations were uncovered in relation to this example, it did seem that this perspective offered an initially adequate framework of interpretation of events.

It was, however, necessary to look elsewhere for the precise nature of the emergent relations between the two major elements which the Royal Commission came to term the 'dyarchy' in racing control. The managerialist logic of the Board's policies impelled it into a concern with some key

elements of racing control, traditionally the preserve of the 'traditional intellectuals' of the Jockey Club. Pivotal among these were the issues of the fixture list, prize money distribution and security in racing. These bore implications for the traditional structure of racing and the values embodied in it, particularly in relation to the questions of 'quality' and breeding, for the relations between the racecourses and the Jockey Club and for the management of racing discipline. It was evident that the Levy Board had pulled back from the brink to reach an uneasy accommodation, but not before the growing size of the levy contribution intensified the relation of dependence between the two organisations such that the Jockey Club was forced to cede a diminution of its space for autonomous and arbitrary decision making. The latter consideration marked another difficulty in relations, namely the lack of abutment or congruence in organisational style. It was seen that the remnants of patrimonialism embodied in the Jockey Club squared uneasily with the legal rationality of the Levy Board whose reference point was the future rather than the past and whose bye-word was planning rather than atavistic celebration. Joint organisations were thus to be reconstructed on more representative and tripartite lines with strategic decision making subject to bilateral negotiation. The traditional hegemony of the Jockey Club over strategic and some operational dimensions of racing was thus substantially mediated in a short space of time.

These were developments precipitated by the racing establishment itself, albeit in the context of the compelling economic weakness of racing in the 1950's. It is true that the Jockey Club had initially proposed a Tote Monopoly scheme to take effect in the wake of the impending betting legislation of 1960, which had been turned down by the Government. The Jockey Club was also not to know that the Levy Board would not prove as manipulable as the old R.B.C.B. However, the racing hierarchy was

determined to exact some form of compensation in a deal over the legislation to the extent that it seems to have been blinded to the possible longer term organisational consequences. With the benefit of hindsight quite different strategies might, and could, have been pursued in the politics of the legislation.[2]

It would, however, have required an inordinate degree of perspicacity to have predicted these developments solely on the basis of a reading of the Betting Levy Act 1961, which enjoined the Levy Board to act for the benefit of racing. The policies of the Board also had, not entirely predictable, consequences for the other important area discussed, namely the social production of the racehorse. The two most obvious examples being the bureaucratisation of the gift relationship and the institutionalisation of national collective bargaining. It will also be interesting to witness the longer term consequences of a further recent intervention in this field, namely the financial and organisational under-writing of a centralised stable staff training school. This move, which broadly speaking, may be interpreted as a 'productive' policy addressed to the problem of the reproduction of labour power specific to the industry, is premissed on a managerial interpretation of some of the processes discussed in Chapters Five to Eight. This interpretation is euphemistically known as the 'labour problem'. As the subjective data indicated, from the perspective of experienced stable employees, it might be better termed the 'employer problem' - the failure of employers over time adequately to reward experienced workers and to support the structure of occupational socialisation, in the context of altered market relations. This syndrome was intensified by the bloodstock boom of the early 1970's and the resultant increase in the throughput of animals. Some of the energy for this increase was generated by the Levy Board which dramatically increased its relative prize money contribution in this period.

At the same time, the prize money contribution from the racecourses did also decline dramatically but the Levy Board could, nevertheless, be seen to be creating more favourable conditions or a more optimistic climate of expectation for racehorse owners.

Some important developments were also detected in the investigation of the social production of the racehorse. The study concentrated upon the nature of stable work and the community and culture which this generates among the basic grade workers, and upon employment relationships. As Khan (1980) has pointed out, training methods and technology have not changed very much in two hundred years. However, there is a case for arguing that as far as the stable worker is concerned, recent years have witnessed a degree of occupational deskilling, the undermining of customary methods of job training and skill acquisition and a consequent dilution of the occupation. Cutting across this process was also the factor of an increased degree of feminisation. These developments were associated with increased throughput, relative decline in labour availability, intensification of labour and simultaneous dilution of work skills and occupational role expectations. These could be related to specific characteristics of the particular locale studied, but the general hue and cry about, and the official labelling of, the 'labour problem' and the belated response of the Levy Board discussed earlier, suggest that this constellation of factors is of more than just parochial significance.

Among the consequences were a heightening of generational friction within the occupation and an amplification of the frustrations which the oscillating nature of the racing business routinely generates. The younger generation of workers also appear to have lost some 'respect' for traditional skills and diffuse forms of knowledge which bound the occupation together,

albeit in a position of subordination and dependence. It can be speculated that employers will come to cultivate and rely upon an increasingly narrow core of workers to supply strategic skills and knowledge, polarising the occupation between core and peripheral or casual elements. Personal observation suggests that stable workers with the appropriate race riding and stable work experience, even in the depressed context of the 1980's, are able to command employment with relative facility. Many such workers are eventually drawn toward employment in the sphere of domestic production where their experience may mean virtual control of day to day work and supervision of young, probably female workers. Favourable accommodation and other benefits are likely to be available in this sector of the industry where pervasive, face-to-face interaction will be encouraged. Elsewhere, however, especially in the main centres of employment, the processes described appear to have heralded an erosion of the real force of traditionalism though some employers will prefer to maintain the style of paternalism. Economic power, structural dependence and more instrumental and mercenary orientations on both sides now seem less widely fogged by the customary appearances of paternalism and trappings of traditional authority. It is unlikely that this will be reversed by the recession of the 1980's, despite the consequent swing of market power towards the employers.

Hence the combination of the mysterious and the traditional in racing work which has habitually evoked a benign curiousity in onlookers can be calculated to have been undermined in these circumstances. As racing becomes less opaque in these terms, less obviously differentiated from other secondary economic activities, so it might be expected that the fund of 'cultural goodwill' towards racing, as it were, among sections of the population may be used up at an increasing rate and its mystique eroded.

The changing conditions of racing work were also reflected in the subjective responses of the workers studied. Despite superficially conducive circumstances, there is little evidence of the stereotypical, deferential worker among the racing lads. On the whole, workers showed both a high affective attachment to their work, their animals and often a good deal of respect for their present employer. However, this was normally tempered by a sharp instrumentalism, frequently expressed in individualistic means of grievance resolution. Such instrumentalism appeared to be sufficiently strong to unhinge the loyalties said to be characteristic of traditional authority and particularistic employer strategies. This ambivalence, however, was translated into 'independence' rather than 'opposition', a feature evidently reinforced by the pervasiveness of competitive values and individualism in racing culture. It is therefore necessary to modify the stereotypical view of the form of social relations in racing stables as epitomised in commonsense notions of deferential comportment. In any case, these fail to appreciate the economic and structural supports of traditional authority. The blanket application of such terms to this area of racing then is now more dubious.

It is argued in Chapter Seven that, sociologically, the notion of 'occupational community' had been overinterpreted. However, in the context of this discussion, it does appear to be one element in the internal domain of racing which evidences a degree of continuity and provides some of the raw material of racing with which outsiders may particularly identify. For despite the disagreements, the competition, divisions and contradictions, the occupation of the racing lad does provide a basis of community, a community of shared forms of discourse, understanding, experience and affectiveness. It is, of course, also rather insular but less parochial than many working class occupational communities. While it harbours the potent axes of generation and gender and is not able to support a solidaristic opposition, it is

important in sustaining a social distance from employers, and occupational self-confidence and respect. Racing lads tend to have a view of themselves and each other as slightly insane; expressions of craziness in work and socialising incidents are readily stored and re-lived in the occupational folklore. This tendency represents an implicit statement of the distinctiveness of the occupation. Some individuals found the community and its insularity oppressive, but the majority are involved in it to some degree or other. The saturation of life by the values, folklore, demands and interests of racing, the attachment of lads to their animals, their participation in an heroic occupation replete with 'action' and a predilection, especially among the younger generation, for eccentric socialising, are characteristics which in the experience of the lads themselves, evoke a good deal of empathy from outsiders. Graphically, outside of racing, particularly in their original home environment, the lads frequently find themselves received as minor celebrities. This tendency is an index of the benevolent fascination of many ordinary people with the racing world.

Such an interest, however, may well have taken a jolt following the wide publicity given in the media to the stable lads' strike of 1975 which followed a path typical of situations where workers without a strong history of local organisation or militancy are involved. The dispute vividly exposed the nature of commercial and employment practices in the industry to public view. The momentum of the dispute was generated by the resistance of the employers to collective organisation insofar as this was interpreted as an invasion of unwanted 'outside' elements - a 'large trade union' - into racing. Defence against such intrusions has long been the natural response of traditional social structures or communities. Trade unionism, however, was not a novel phenomenon in the industry. The Transport and General Workers Union had a substantial history of collective bargaining in the industry and a

number of labour disputes involving union members had occurred before 1975. Until 1970 or thereabouts, the structure of union organisation had tended to correspond to the paternalistic character of employment relations generally, with little shop floor involvement. The ideological reaction against centralism in some of the major unions in the late 1960's and a corresponding recognition and support for shop floor unionism undoubtedly rubbed off on the growing union organisation at Newmarket in the early 1970's. This gave more effective form than previously to the persistent undercurrent of grievance and resentment systematically generated by the social and economic milieu of racing employment. While open protest was previously not unknown, an added edge was thus given to the conflict which erupted in 1975.

Given the mainsprings of the conflict, an important irony of the dispute was that it directly provoked the intervention of the Levy Board, still considered by many in racing's hierarchy as an 'outsider'. The implicit deal to reach a settlement of the dispute involved authoritative guarantees for the legitimacy of national collective bargaining in the industry which could not be readily undone. This was not an outcome which would have been considered acceptable to the employers at the beginning of the dispute. However, in the wake of this arrangement and in the context of the relative organisational security gained by employee representatives through it, the pattern of organisation moved back towards the earlier centralised form with the 'union' much more distant from the life of the lads. This could account for some of the ambiguity in the subjective responses of the lads on the question of 'the union'.

However, while it is argued that the workforce as a whole lacked solidaristic sentiments and what might be termed 'union mindedness', this had

to be seen in terms of pragmatic considerations and the visibility of the success of unionism, which was low, rather than in terms of deeply held ideological views connected with deferential perspectives. The competitive sporting ideology and the fragmented and isolated nature of work units away from the centre are, however, more pertinent factors which fuse with the pragmatic considerations to render collectivism continually problematic. This indeed is reflected in the 'front loaded' nature of the employee organisations currently involved in the national negotiation machinery. However, the existence of legitimate collective bargaining machinery does provide the union with a relatively secure basis from which to step up local organisation should such a strategy be adopted. In general, the effects of the Levy Board's intervention have reinforced other trends noted concerning the dilution of the pervasive nature of traditionalism in employment relations but this process is as yet far from complete.

Moving from the internal domain of racing to the two broader areas considered, it is argued in the analysis of the significance of the role of sociability that involvement in shared sociable or recreational pursuits is the least significant of four processes contributing to upper class structuration. It has to be conceded that active involvement in the world of horse-racing and other relatively exclusive pursuits, is thus of minor importance in the process of structuration, if they are still a recognisable and distinctive dimension of upper class culture. It is evident that it is unlikely that racing or other forms of sociability offer sufficiently extensive interaction or channels of communication to contribute to the social integration of either a particular sector of, or the upper class as a whole. However, such activities may be seen as important insofar as they provide areas for confirming status and identity, that is, they offer one of a number of alternative identity badges to upper class members. In this may be seen a minimal element of

continuity with the past. Historically, racing is shown to have been a vibrant element of upper class culture but its relative significance has been dwarfed over time by the growth of additional and alternative sociable and recreational outlets. Participation in racehorse ownership, however, continues to offer important social rewards: possibilities for social emulation, status display and the enjoyment of relative exclusivity in a public context.

Racing then does continue as a form of elite sociability but the observation must be kept in proper perspective as must the finding that a small minority of the corporate economic elite evidences a continuity of participation. Racing is clearly not central to this group, however, it can be seen to be one of three or four activities which collectively show a resilience in their ability to attract upper class members and to have maintained a certain position within an expanded complex of upper class culture.

While it is possible to observe such a continuity at the core, it is also necessary to incorporate Khan's (1980) findings to suggest that the periphery has become socially more inclusive. Racing owners have always counted petit bourgeois entrepreneurs, traditional professional and military elements among their number, but Khan's data suggests a greater preponderance of new middle class and professional elements in racehorse ownership, especially from the world of finance and commerce. Thus a certain continuity of social interests is matched by a greater social inclusivity. The latter feature is also evidenced in the growth of syndicated ownership noted by Khan, following the changes to the Rules of Racing relating to ownership in the early 1970's. However, the relationship between racing and upper class culture is still sufficiently recognisable to sustain the customary status associations of the sport, but the link has clearly become more porous and

less determinate and there is every sign that this trend will continue.

The relationship between working class culture and racing may also be seen as increasingly problematic as the status of the mediating variable, the betting tradition in working class culture, is increasingly threatened by factors both intrinsic and extrinsic to the racing and betting complex. It is argued in Chapter Three that it is possible to identify a betting tradition in working class culture which could be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century. The concept of a betting tradition was suggested by a critical analysis of social theories of gambling and the importance of the role of situational factors in explaining participation in different forms of gambling activity which this analysis revealed. Different gambling forms are seen to display different structural characteristics which could articulate with situational factors, to create a specific pattern of gambling involvement. In particular, it is argued that there was a strong degree of congruence between the likely characteristics of horserace betting and some emergent features of working class life when this form of gambling began to be purveyed by promotors in the middle of the nineteenth century.

This conjuncture was sufficiently powerful to generate an enduring association of the working class with racehorse betting for the following century or so. Paradoxically, it was one reinforced by the repressive attitude of the state towards working class gambling which persisted in legal enactments for most of the period. Hence it was that a significant pocket of working class culture became closely and positively involved with an activity traditionally the preserve of groups at the opposite end of the social structure. It seems clear that working class people involved in and imbued with the tradition, developed a technical familiarity with betting and a considerable corpus of knowledge of the activity, its major events, occasions

and personalities, both human and equine. Until the changes wrought in the working class holiday by post-war prosperity and the eager entrepreneurs of the growing leisure industry, this interest was also periodically expressed in excursions to the races which provided a natural object for the day out, for long a common form of communal sociability.

Such a pattern of involvement may be supposed to be more rather than less likely to generate positive identification with the elite stratum of participants in the activity which was traditionally characterised by high social, economic and often political status. Though in this, as mentioned at the outset, racing provided only one of a number of media for the encouragement of broadly deferential sentiments.

Suspending the question of the plausibility of this contention for the moment, it is also apparent from the discussion that certain current trends could be calculated to disturb the customary relationship between working class culture, betting and the world of horse-racing. However, at this moment one can only speculate as to the weight of these effects. It is seen in Chapter Nine that the legalisation of off-course betting revealed the trenchant nature of the betting tradition and that the politics of the legislation has had some far reaching consequences for both the racing and bookmaking industries. In particular there was a dramatic change in the nature of state intervention in the guise of the Levy Board which appeared as the co-ordinator, albeit reluctant, producer interests in the two industries. The managerial politics of the Board laid some important conditions for the growth of the concentrated sector of the bookmaking industry and substantial corporate organisations founded on bookmaking profits. Paradoxically this has led this sector of the trade to develop alternative forms of betting in ways designed to prove attractive to betting shop punters. Such alternative forms

can be expected to make further inroads into the one time monopoly of horse-racing in the working class betting tradition. There is already evidence of a slight decline in the market share of horserace betting since the mid-1970's.[3]

The creation of the Levy Board with statutory revenue raising and allocatory functions for racing has provided a legitimate point of leverage for the racing lobby to press for the maximum extraction from betting revenue and thus betting expenditure. Compared with the proportion extracted through excise duty, the levy is small, but together these taxes can be expected to encourage punters to be more receptive to other forms of gambling media where taxable deductions are either smaller or less visible. Indeed, notwithstanding their brushes with the Gaming Board and licensing authorities in the London gaming industry in the early 1980's, some large bookmaking firms have in recent years begun to promote casino gaming facilities with far less exclusiveness enabling the more extensive participation of working class punters. It is true, however, that the regulatory structure of casino gambling at present limits the potential of this strategy.

Alternatively, it is possible that this factor will drive some cash betting underground. Both the Chairman of the Levy Board and bookmakers representatives have claimed that illegal betting is on the increase once again though neither is able to take a disinterested position on this issue.[4] However, the erosion of locality as a focus for working class community means that illegal betting is unlikely to reach a meaningful comparison with the levels of the pre-legislation era. In 1983, the Levy Board reported a marked downturn in betting turnover and hence the amount of money likely to be available for distribution, and cut its programme of expenditure accordingly. Undoubtedly, this is largely due to the effects of recession of

the 1980's which finally found their way to curbing gambling expenditure. It may well be, indeed, that the conjunction of the recession and the factors mentioned above, will deal a serious blow to the working class betting tradition.

The large bookmaking firms, further, have used their profit base to develop interests in other forms of leisure provision and most have been incorporated by holding companies with broad based interests in the service and leisure sectors. However, more generally, the development of alternative leisure outlets and venues for leisure expenditure by entrepreneurial and corporate business may also be seen as capable of sapping the interest and wherewithal for extensive participation in betting. Capitalist entrepreneurs and promotors have always been innovative in the sphere of leisure, and the changing pattern of working class sociability in the post-war era partly reflects this (c.f. Clarke, 1979). It would be surprising if the betting tradition were able to survive this wider process unscathed. Indeed there is some evidence from the work of Downes et al (1976) and Cornish (1978) that regular involvement in betting activity and thus contact with the world of racing, has become a characteristic of a shrinking, if more intensively active, proportion of working class people. It is clearly too early to write off the historic association of the working class with horserace betting but the signs indicate some weakening of its hold on working class ways of life. The interesting paradox is that to some extent these possibilities may be laid at the door of developments internal to the political economy of racing and bookmaking in recent years.

It may be argued then that the symbolic output of racing and the attachment to racing of the working class, have both altered in ways likely to undermine the potential for class identification mediated through this

activity. As it is suggested in Chapter One that the initial impulse for studying racing in some detail concerned its wider class overtones, it is necessary at this point to return briefly to the assumptions which were characterised there as the 'hard core'. It is in the nature of the status of such assumptions that they are not directly 'tested' by the research, and in any event, the issues they raise are too broad to be finally resolved here. However, the research must inevitably lead the researcher back to a more fundamental questioning of these underlying assumptions. In this context, it leads to the view that much more attention needs to be given theoretically and empirically to the capacity of cultural practices to generate identity and positive dispositions towards the status quo, elite groups, inequality and so on. In this process special attention should be given to particular forms and different levels of sport, perhaps the most ubiquitous element of popular culture and to the relationship between sport, culture and ideology more generally. The view adopted here is one which acknowledges that such a capacity should not be underestimated but which also emphasises the need for a more dialectical view of such processes. For it is evident that antagonism, disenchantment and social distance is simultaneously generated both by wider economic and political processes and by the living out of cultural practices themselves, including the production and consumption of sport, themselves.

It is instructive here to return briefly to the discussion of working class culture encountered in the analysis of gambling. It was seen there, for example, that even positive attempts to promote class harmony through rational recreation failed. Working class people were quite prepared to exploit some of the facilities offered by rational recreationists and other forms of paternalistic intervention but they were by no means prepared to accept all the moral strings and ideology which were routinely attached to

these. As Cunningham (1980) points out, this strategy was undermined by the class conflict and antagonism which continued to be generated by the exploitative relations at the workplace and for which even conscious strategies of cultural amelioration were no match. In addition to this, many preferred forms of popular and working class pastimes were being repressed either in legalistic terms or in terms of practical constraints, still others were appropriated by middle and upper class groups for their own more exclusive use. The recreational and sporting elements of culture were subject to political manipulation and were a site of often bitter class struggle. These were hardly circumstances, even given the elongated nature of developments, conducive to successful strategies of class conciliation and identity through leisure, sport or culture more generally.

It can be argued, however, that manipulative strategies are bound to prove less significant than the effect of more diffuse and implicit values and symbolism purveyed by sporting and other cultural practices. This is a common theme, for example, among those writers who emphasise the permeation of many modern spectator sports with the value structure of capitalism. There is some validity in this kind of analysis in respect of particular acitivities but it is not clear what effects these structures are deemed to have on the value dispositions of the consumers and thus for the reproduction of ideology, domination and subordination. Somewhat paradoxically, the discussion of working class culture and the betting tradition, illustrated the autonomous nature of much working class culture and its resistance both to elite conceptions of gambling morality and to the legal repression of gambling within its milieu. Indeed, much historical evidence points to the relative impermeability of working class culture to alternative values and ways of life, as middle class reformers, much to their chagrin, persistently found. The working class was certainly subordinate but

it also seems to have developed quite separate and autonomous ways of life. Hence although working class people involved in the betting tradition assimilated a good deal of the technical and sporting world of racing, it is problematic whether the social ambiance of racing was absorbed to the extent of encouraging a generalised 'deference' to, or identity across class lines with the embodiments of privilege and rank customarily associated with racing.

The relevance of assumptions regarding class identity raised above has been implicitly questioned from a somewhat different standpoint. In a challenging thesis Abercrombie et al (1980) severely question the importance accorded to ideology, specifically the 'dominant ideology', for stability in class formations, especially in late capitalist societies. While difficult to identify, the dominant ideology in Feudalism and early Capitalism were primarily of relevance to the integration and cohesion of the dominant classes and had little purchase on subordinate classes. The mechanisms of transmission were in any case insufficiently developed to reach subordinate classes. Under late capitalism, it is argued, the dominant ideology is more fraqmented, even contradictory, and unevenly held by upper class groups themselves. However, the altered structure of economic power also makes it largely unncessary for the cohesion of the dominant class. While prepared to admit a degree of 'secondary incorporation' of the working class, it is held that there is little evidence that the dominant ideology has much effect on that class despite the improved efficiency of the means of mass communication. In any case, stability such as it is, can be explained with reference to the 'dull compulsion of economic relations' without recourse to 'ideology'.

There is a good deal to be said for the importance of economistic

reasons for (relative) social stability and in the mediation of class conflict though this is a novel theme neither in conventional nor Marxist sociology. There is clearly also a sense in which the 'dominant ideology' is for the dominant class. In this context it might be observed here that the theme of the coalescence of interests of upper and lower class members in activities such as racing was typically echoed only by elite figures and was, in fact, occasionally enlisted in the nineteenth century in the defence of Turf interests against political attacks. It could be considered ideological both in a general sense and in the sense of mere propaganda.

While the two notions need to be kept separate, the critique of the role of ideology discussed above could presumably be extended to include culture, in which case forms of popular culture, sport and so on, would also be seen to be marginal, at best, to the question of stability and social integration. However, this would imply both an acceptance of the overly mechanistic conception of ideology implied by Abercrombie et al, and a segmentalist view of the relationship between economic, ideological and cultural processes, a position criticised in the discussion in Chapter Three. Willis's (1979) argument asserting the inseparable nature of work and culture may be recalled here as, on a somewhat different plane, may the examples of the struggle over St. Monday and the issue of workplace gambling activity. At one level or another, each of these processes is infused with elements of the others. Further, while a discursive journey into the concept is beyond the scope of the present discussion, the animated debates of recent years on the nature of ideology have implictly pointed to the importance of the ideological spectrum of commonsense assumptions generated by, and in turn permeating, everyday activities, whether in the sphere of work and economy or sport and culture or whatever. The sphere of commonsense may be a good deal removed from the major prongs of the 'dominant ideology' -

whatever that is, but seems to retain an effectiveness for all that. The natural 'commonsense' of particularistic identity and loyalties generated by team games is not necessarily ideological. However, the extension of these under certain circumstances to the sphere of national sporting performance and then, to take a dramatic example, military conflict, is equally commonsensical and also ideological. The coincidence on the Falklands War and the World Cup competition in 1982, provided a graphic example of how metaphors of collective and national solidarity could be floated and mixed from a basis in commonsense which made any media or overly political play on these themes superfluous. The role that such 'ideological work' plays in the reproduction of relations of domination and subordination can surely not be dismissed as marginal unless everyday life is to be dismissed in the same way.

It seems clear, however, that what is needed in terms of a vindication of the 'hard core' assumptions referred to earlier, is some careful work on the precise mediations through which sport and popular cultural practices in general, serve not only to facilitate identity and accommodation in the face of differentiation and inequality and so on but also to provide the space in which such processes may be unhinged. For much of the discussion in this area does seem to be overdetermined and undialectical. At the moment, the question of the precise role of such cultured forms in this context remains open.

Many of the issues raised in this thesis, however, have been of a more prosaic character and it is at this level that the discussion may be concluded. In view of the extensive and, on the whole sensible, recommendations for the reform of the organisation of racing made by the Rothschild Commission, it would be spurious to offer a blueprint for the

future here.[5] In any event, as the treatment of the Royal Commission's recommendations has confirmed, the racing hierarchy has customarily displayed itself to be hard of hearing and in the face of this has, nevertheless, demonstrated a remarkable capacity for survival. It is apposite, however, to return to an issue which in a sense provided biographical rationale for the study, namely the question of the relationship between the punter, and specifically the working class punter, and racing.

It is evident from the discussion in Chapter Nine particularly, that were the plug to be pulled on the considerable trough of publicly dispensed funds currently supporting the racing circus, severe retrenchment and probably centralisation would result. Racing would, however, continue. There should be no mistake as to the strength of the propensity among the wealthy to seek out extravagant forms of consumption and there will, apparently, always be those willing to expend considerable sums in pursuit of this particular activity. Nevertheless, it is clear that the extent of racing in the particular circumstances of this country is also heavily dependent on the consumption and leisure habits of large numbers of off-course cash punters, the majority of whom may be said to be working class.

The present shape of the racing game in Britain then rests on the creaming off of the expenditure of largely working class consumers for the benefit of a hierarchy of producer groups. Ironically it is precisely the interests of these punters which are studiously neglected by the racing industry and, arguably, the betting industry as well. It could be argued that punters as consumers have no more claim to special protection than any other group of consumers - that they exercise influence with recourse to the ultimate consumer prerogative as in any other market place. Indeed there is

some evidence of punters exercising just this choice in recent years.[6] This argument would be more convincing, however, were it not for two main factors.

First, in the case of racing and betting, the interests of producer groups have, effectively, been orchestrated by a state agency, the Levy Board. Indeed the exploitation of the punter has been conducted with a studied rationality which has transformed a moral and political issue into one of technocratic puzzle solving. While there was some conflict between the empirical interests of producer groups and the Board at different times, there is little doubt that it has acted in their long term interest, given the existing parameters of the organisation of racing and betting. By the same token, it would be difficult to find examples of the Levy Board seeking to protect or promote the interests of punters above and beyond ways which did not also increase betting turnover and the levy.[7] No explicit attention appears to have been given to the question of what punters' interests might be empircally or where their objective preferences might lie in connection with the spending of the levy, for example, though the 1961 Betting Levy legislation also did little to encourage this. It might well be argued that revenue expended on sophisticated security procedures, interest-free capital loans to racecourses, and the National Stud and so on could have been better used in reducing racecourse admission prices, attracting more racegoers and racecourse punters and ensuring a keener on-course market and thus better value for money for the off-course punter. The disproportionate prize money grants to the pattern races also has no bearing on the experience of the betting shop punter, arguably none on turnover and probably little on racecourse entertainment.

It is also clear that the space created by the Levy Board for the growth

of large scale bookmaking is linked to a decline in the value of cash betting to the ordinary punter, leaving aside the question of tax deductions. The organisational and competitive strategies of the larger firms have increased relative overheads and thus the cost of the betting service, leading to a decline in returns to punters.[8] Experienced observers suggest a progressive shading of the odds offered betting shop clients.[9] In addition, typically, bookmakers have arbitrarily increased deductions from punters by rounding up the combined levy and tax obligations from roughly 9% to 10%.

The individual punter then is faced with what could be subjectively viewed as a more or less organised conspiracy. The submissions to the Royal Commission on Gambling showed that in the case of racing interests in particular, this is compounded by an arrogant disregard for the position of the punter whose betting expenditure is simply assumed to belong to racing.[10] In the face of this, it would be facile to argue that cash punters are in no greater need of protection than other categories of consumers.

The second major consideration concerns the legal framework of betting which has a number of implications. Following the mid-nineteenth century legislation, gambling contracts remain outside the scope of the law and there are good practical reasons why this will remain the case. On balance, however, this favours the bookmaker rather than the cash punter. The latter must actually hand over cash in order to bet but the bookmaker is under no contractual obligation to honour the bet, though of course there are strong practical constraints on defaulting. Nevertheless, although there exist voluntary procedures for resolving disputes and it is possible, theoretically, for aggrieved punters to challenge the bookmaker's right to renew a licence, there are for practical purposes no effective sanctions with which punters may influence bookmaker practices. Defaulting is not a problem of

significance in practice but this situation does give considerable scope for arbitrary decision making and practices by bookmakers. Firms typically employ a range of restrictive practices which effectively and often covertly, impose odds limits to reduce liabilities, and which are governed by nothing more than the whim of the individual proprietor. Punters may even be refused the facility to bet for no other reason than that they are successful!

The existing framework of legislation which legalises but regulates betting also obviously constrains the ability of punters to vote with their feet. It would be churlish to deny the sense of the exchange of legitimacy for regulation but the latter is also arguably oppressive of the interests of punters. The 'demand rule', for example, in the provisions concerning the licensing of betting shops may be seen as denying the possible benefits of competition between bookmakers to punters. Both this rule and the restrictions on betting office trade and the facilities legitimately offered to clients, reverberate with the moral paternalism of the pre-1960 status quo. The resulting starkness of the typical betting shop may be seen as lowering the cost of the betting service and thus as of benefit to the punter. Such advantages by default, however, do not alter the structure of downward pressure, both commercial and regulatory, on the punter without a commensurate attention to consumer interests or producer accountability.

This situation has not gone unnoticed, though it remains untouched for practical purposes. The Rothschild Commission made a number of fragmentary observations on this theme but rested on inferences drawn from the 'public interest', 'public desire' or 'community', with little reference to the concrete population of real punters.[12] While stridently dismissive of the moral perspective on gambling, the Commission upheld the status quo in terms of the demand rule, the betting shop environment and on gambling

contracts.[13] Importantly, it did, however, recommend in a note on consumer protection, that the Office of Fair Trading should extend its auspices to betting office punters.

The lack of affirmative intervention in this area in the intervening period or of a reorientation of the racing and betting industries towards the punter may be considered a deficiency in terms of social justice but it may also be that such a course will have negative implications for the future of the racing and betting complex in its present form. There seems to be considerable scope even within the constraints of a bourgeois society, for achieving more public accountability in this area and for liberating horse-racing for more widespread consumption as an authentic element of popular culture. Indeed it may well be that these represent necessary conditions if British racing is to persist in a recognisable form in the twenty-first century.

Notes

1. Sources: W. Vamplew (1976) p. 190; Racing Industry Statistical Bureau (1980); Statistics 1975-79.

2. Even the base alternative of non-involvement could have brought longer term advantages to the Jockey Club hierarchy and arguably to racing. Undoubtedly, more shrinkage in the industry would have been inevitable. Equally, more attention would have been required to be paid to the spectator value of the sport; the totalisator could have been more effectively incorporated allowing racecourses to set up their own machines; favourable deals could have been struck with bookmakers on copyright for racing lists - the Jockey Club after all controlled the key resource of information on runners, etc; the expansion of fixtures necessary for the development of the betting industry would have been subject to keen negotiation and so on. All this would have left the Jockey Club in complete control. However, in the process of apparently 'doing nothing' over the 1960 legislation, its leadership role might have come under severe pressure. All this of course is highly conjectural.

3. Indeed, according to one estimate by Market Research Great Britain (1981), the market share of horserace betting declined from 45.9% in 1975 to 42.9% in 1979.

4. On 8th February 1983, Bookmakers' representatives submitted a memorandum to the Home Secretary, documenting 500 or so cases of illegal betting. This followed a joint approach by the Racing and Betting Industries to the Chancellor in November 1983 on the issue of the effects of betting duty on the growth of illegal betting.

5. The content of the recommendations was indeed laudable but the Commission displayed a little naivety in its anticipation of policy responses from either government or the racing hierarchy.

6. Off-course betting turnover appears to have declined in real terms since the later 1970's (see Table 14) and, as mentioned above, there is some evidence of an increase in illegal betting.

7. The financing of the overnight declaration scheme to give more accurate information to punters might be cited as an exception here. However, it is also true that bets placed on non-runners do not contribute to turnover!

8. This follows from the work of Allum (1980) discussed in Chapter Nine and is supported by Bull's analysis of leading bookmakers' acounts in his submission to the Royal Commission (Bull, 1977).

9. Bull (1976) para. 82.

10. The submission of the Thoroughbred Breeders Association and the Horseracing Industries Joint Submission are instructive in this respect.

11. It might be noted here that virtually a defining characteristic of 'corporatist' organisations and quangos such as the Levy Board is their relative insulation from processes of democratic accountability.

12. The Commission did, however, take evidence from the Daily Mirror Punters Club.

13. Vending machines for food and non-alcholic drinks were condoned but television broadcasts of racing were not.

Abbreviations

A.C.A.S.	Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
B.O.L.A.	Betting Office Licensees Association
B.R.I.C.	Bloodstock and Racing Industries Confederation
B.H.A.	British Horse-racing Authority
C.C.G.	Churches Council on Gambling
H.B.L.B.	Horserace Betting Levy Board
H.T.B.	Horserace Totalisator Board
H.A.C.	Horse-racing Advisory Council
N.A.G.L.	National Anti-Gambling League
N.J.C.S.S.	National Joint Council for Stable Staffs
N.U.A.W.	National Union of Agricultural Workers
R.B.C.B.	Racecourse Betting Control Board
S.L.A.	Stable Lads Association
T.G.W.U.	Transport and General Workers Union

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APPENDIX 1

BIRMINGHAM POLYTECHNIC

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY & APPLIED SOCIAL STUDIES

STABLE WORKERS SURVEY

Interview No.

Interviewer

	Code	Next Q
Name _____		
Yard _____ 1		
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	

Address _____

_____

_____

_____

(Introductory Statement)

I'd like to start by asking you a few background details about your life up till now.

Section A. Social Background Occupational Experience

Q.1. So firstly, could you tell me whereabouts you were born?

	Code	Next Q
Write in _____ 2		
England/Wales	1	
Scotland	2	
N. Ireland	3	
Eire	4	
Other	5	
3		
Industrial Town/City	1	
Other Town/City	2	
Country Village	3	
Newmarket	4	
Lambourn	5	
Other Racing Centre	6	

(2)

Code | Next

Q. 2 And whereabouts did you live for the largest period before leaving School?

4

Write in _____

1
2
3
4
5
6

Q. 2b And for about how long was that

5

Under 5 Years 1
5 but less than 10 yrs 2
10 " " " 15 " 3
15 years 4

Q. 3 Could I ask you which year you were born in?

Write in _____

Q. 4 Could you tell me what sort of job your father does or did?

6

Manual job in racing 1
Clerical/Executive job in racing 2
Unskilled Manual Industrial 3
Unskilled Manual Non Industrial 4
Skilled Manual Industrial 5
Skilled Non Manual Industrial 6
Professional/Managerial 7

Q. 5 Did your parents or any relatives know people in the racing industry?

7

YES 1
NO 2
D/K 3

Q. 6 How long have you been in your present job at _____'s yard?

8

Less than 3 months 1
3 Months but less than 6 Months 2
6 " " " " 12 " 3
1 Year " " " 2 Years 4
2 Years " " " 5 " 5
5 " " " " 10 " 6
10 " " " " 20 " 7
Over 20 " 8

		Code	Next Q
Q. 7	Have you ever had any other type of job besides working with race horses? 9		
	YES	1	7b
	NO	2	8
Q. 7c	Could you tell me what sort of jobs you've had then? 10		
	Unskilled Manual Industrial	1	
	Unskilled Manual Non Industrial	2	
	Skilled Manual Industrial	3	
	Skilled Manual Non Industrial		
	Other job(s) with horses	5	
	Clerical	6	
	Other	7	
Q. 7b	Altogether, roughly how many jobs would you say you've had since leaving school, outside of racing? 11		
	2 or less	1	
	2 but less than 5	2	
	5 " " " 10	3	
	More than 10	4	
Q. 8	At what age did you leave school?		
	Min. School leaving age 12	1	
	17 Years	2	
	18 Years	3	
Q. 8b	And did you get any qualifications at all? 13		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	Refused to state	3	

		Code	Next
Q. 8c	What sort of thing for example?	14	
	GCE's	1	
	CSE's	2	
	Other	3	
Q. 9	What was the very first job you had directly after leaving school?	15	
	Stable work	1	
	Unskilled Manual Industrial	2	
	Unskilled Manual Non Industrial	3	
	Skilled Manual/Industrial	4	
	Skilled Manual Non Industrial	5	
	Clerical	6	
	Craft Apprenticeship	7	
Q. 9b	Whereabouts was that?		
	Write in _____	16	
	Newmarket/Lambourn	1	
	Other racing centre	2	
	(on leaving school) home Town	3	
	Other	4	
Q. 9c	Did you have to move house/lodgings to take it?	17	
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	If present job=first job		
Q. 9d	About how long did you spend in your first job?	18	
	Less than 3 Months	1	
	3 Months but less than 6 Months	2	
	6 " " " " 12 Months	3	
	1 Year " " " 2 years	4	
	2 Years " " " 5 years	5	
	Over 5 years	6	

		Code	Next Q
Q. 9e	Why exactly did you leave your first job?	19	
	Job intrinsic reasons	1	
	Found better paid job elsewhere	2	
	No prospects	3	
	Money reasons	4	
	Made redundant	5	
	Got sacked	6	
	Other	7	
Q. 9f	Why did you choose your current job?		
		20	
	Good conditions and pay	1	
	Chance of good presents and pool	2	
	Successful yard	3	
	Good trainer	4	
	Good horses	5	
Q. 9g	Could you tell me what the largest period is that you've stayed in a job besides your present one?		
		21	
	Less than 6 Months	1	
	6 Months but less than 1 Year	2	
	1 Year " " " 2 Years	3	
	2 Years " " " 3 Years	4	
	3 Years " " " 5 Years	5	
	Over 5 Years	6	
Q. 10	Have you ever worked in any stable besides this one?		
		22	
	YES	1	
	NO	2	Q 11
Q. 10b	How many?		
		23	
	1	1	
	2	2	
	3	3	
	4	4	
	5	5	
	Over 5	6	

6

	Code	Next
Q. 10c Were they here in _____ or elsewhere? 24		
Newmarket	1	
Lambourn	2	
Both	3	
Other racing Centre	4	
N, L + Other	5	
Q. 11 Have you ever worked before in this yard before your current period of employment? 25		
YES	1	
NO	2	
Q. 11b How long ago was that? 26		
Less than 1 Year	1	
1 Year but less than 2 years	2	
2 Years " " " 3 "	3	
3 " " " " 5 "	4	
Over 5 years	5	
Q. 11c Why did you leave in the first place? 27		
Made redundant	1	
Sacked	2	
'fancied a change'	3	
Money reasons	4	
found better paid job in racing	5	
" " " " outside	6	
intrinsic reasons	7	
Other	8	
D/K	9	
Q. 11d So why did you come back then? 28		
Offered a job by 'old' employer	1	
Missed the yard/job	2	
Missed friends	3	
Missed the money	4	
	5	
	6	

	Code	Next Q
Q. 12 Who or what gave you the idea of working in a racing stable in the first place? (Ring only most important)		
29		
Parents	1	
Parents were in racing	2	
Teacher	3	
Friends	4	
Relatives	5	
Government Employment Agency	6	
Newspaper	7	
T.V.	8	
Other	9	
Q. 12b Did either of your parents or a relative have an interest in racing/betting?		
30		
YES	1	
NO	2	
Q. 13 Well how did you go about getting a job?		
31		
(Unsolicited) Personal Application by letter	1	
by visit	2	
(Unsolicted) Parental Application by letter	3	
by visit	4	
Introduction to Trainer through friend/relative	5	
Sent by Employment/Careers people	6	
Reply to Trainers Advertisment	7	
Other	8	
Q. 13b Why did you decide to come into racing in the end then?		
32		
Jockey Ambitions	1	
Liked animals	2	
Parental pressure	3	
No special reason	4	
'didn't have much choice with my size'	5	
	6	
	7	
	8	

	Code	Next
Q. 13c Having decided to come into racing did your parents encourage you or try to discourage you from starting		
33		
encourage	1	
discourage	2	
in different	3	
(Not if present job=first job)		
Q. 14 Casting your mind back overall the jobs you've ever had including the present one, which have you liked the best?		
34		
Present Job	1	
Other Job in Racing	2	
" " outside Racing	3	
Q. 14b Why do you say that, exactly		
35		
Extrinsic factors	1	
Intrinsic factors	2	
Bath	3	
Q. 15 Have you ever beenunemployedfor longer than a few days at a time?		
36		
Yes	1	
No	2	Q1
Q. 15b How many times would you say?		
37		
	1	
	2	
3 but less than 5	3	
over 5	4	
D/K	5	
Q. 15c If you added all the times up about how long would you say it ammounted to?		
38		
Less than 1 week	1	
1 week but less than 1 month	2	
1 Month " " " 3 "	3	
3 " " " " 6 "	4	
6 " " " " 12 "	5	
12 " " " " 2 years	6	
Over 2 years	7	

		Code	Next
Q. 15d How long was the last time?	39		
Less than 3 months		1	
3 months but less than 6 months		2	
6 " " " " 12 months		3	
1 year " " " 2 years		4	
2 years " " " 5 years		5	
Section B. Apprenticeship			
Q. 16 Are you apprenticed at the moment?	40		
YES		1	
NO		2	17
Q. 16b How long have you got to do?	41		
Years		1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
		6	
		7	
Q. 16c Was the apprenticeship your idea?	42		
YES		1	16e
NO		2	16d
Q. 16d Who persuaded you to become apprenticed then?	43		
Trainer		1	
Parent/Relative		2	
Employment Services		3	
		4	
		5	
Q. 16e You're aiming to become a jockey then?	44		
YES		1	
NO		2	
D/K			
Q. 16f How would you rate your chances?	45		
Very good		1	
good		2	
poor		3	
very slim		4	
no chance		5	

(10)

		Code	Next
Q. 16g	How many rides in public have you had?	46	
	None	1	
	But less than 5	2	
	5 but less than 10	3	
	10 " " " 50	4	
	50 " " " 100	5	
	100" " " 500	6	
	500+	7	
Q. 16h	How many of these would be for other yards?	47	
	Just a few	1	
	about 25%	2	
	50%	3	
	about 75%	4	
Q. 17	Have you served an apprenticeship?	48	
	YES	1	
	NO	2	Q
Q. 17b	About how many rides did you get?	49	
	None	1	
	1 but less than 5	2	
	5 " " " 10	3	
	10 " " " 50	4	
	50 " " " 100	5	
	100 " " " 500	6	
	500+	7	
Q. 17c	And about how many of these were for other yards?	50	
	Just a few	1	
	about 25%	2	
	about 50%	3	
	about 75%	4	
Q. 17d	Do you think you got a fair crack of the whip?	51	
	YES	1	
	NO	2	

	Code	Next Q
Q. 17e Why do you think you didn't make it as a fully fledged jockey?		
52		
Weight problems	1	
'Lacking help from trainer'	2	
Didn't have the ability	3	
Didn't have the motivation/lost thrill of race riding	4	
Other diversions (drink)	5	
Q. 17f Did you think you would eventually become a jockey at any stage during the Apprenticeship		
53		
YES	1	
NO	2	
Q. 17g How do you feel about not being a jockey now?		
54		
Very disappointed	1	
Mildly disappointed	2	
Got used to the situation	3	
Glad to be out of race riding	4	
	5	

SECTION C ATTITUDES TO WORK

Code | Next

I'd like now to ask some questions about your present work.

Q18 Firstly, could you tell me whether you find it especially interesting or not?(probe) 55

	Code
very boring/monotonous	1
very interesting all the time	2
interesting most of the time	3
mostly boring/monotonous	4
	5

Q19 What do you think makes it especially . . . ? 56,57

	Code	Next
variety of work	1	1
responsibility	2	2
challenge of work	3	3
skill involved	4	4
outdoor work	5	5
work with animals	6	6
independence	7	7
other	8	8
D.K.	9	9

58,59

	Code	Next
routine repitition	1	1
job very simple	2	2
other	3	3
D.K.		

Q20 What do you find most enjoyable about what you actually do? 60

	Code
travelling to races	1
riding as exercise	2
grooming/dressing	3
working with the other lads	4
	5
	6

Q21 Some people would say that work with horses/animals is special in some way.
Would you agree or disagree with this? 61

	Code
agree	1
disagree	2
DK	3

		Code	Next
Q21b Why do you say that?	62		
	dependence of animals	1	
	always something to learn	2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
Q22 What is the worst thing about the work you actually do?	63		
	mucking out	1	
	grooming/dressing	2	
	travelling	3	
	riding/breaking yearlings	4	
		5	
		6	
Q22b And what about the job as a whole?	64		
	low wages	1	
	hours/evening stables/weekends	2	
	winter work	3	
		4	
Q23 Could I ask you how many horses you normally 'do'?	65		
		1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
	over 5	6	
Q24 Since you've been in your present yard, would you say that this number has	66		
	decreased	1	
or	remained the same	2	
	increased	3	
	D/K	4	

		Code	Ne
Q24b	And according to your impressions, in the industry as a whole?		
	67		
	decreased?	1	
	remained the same	2	
	increased	3	
	D/K	4	
Q25	Many people have the impression that lads are very strongly attached to their horses. Would you say this was:		
	68		
	generally ture	1	
	or truc in a lot of cases	2	
	or not especially true	3	2
	or not true at all	4	2
	D/K	5	2
Q26	How long would you say it takes for such an attachment to develop?		
	69		
	no time at all	1	
	short time	2	
	quite a long time	3	
	very long time	4	
	D/K	5	
Q27	Has one of your horses ever been transferred to another lad?		
	70		
	yes	1	
	no	2	4
Q27b	How did you feel about this?		
	71		
	'sick'	1	
	angry	2	
	indifferent	3	
	glad - (he was a rogue/dog)	4	
		5	

		Code	Next
Q28	How do you feel when one of your horses is removed from the yard altogether?		
	72		
	indifferent	1	
	very sick	2	
	sick but what can you do	3	
	depends on the horse	4	
		5	
		6	
Q28b	Do lads get used to this happening or not?		
	73		
	yes	1	
	no	2	
	they have no choice	3	
	D/K	4	
Q29	If you could start your working life over again, would you choose a different occupation?		
	74		
	yes	1	29b
	no	2	30
Q29b	If you had a free choice what would you choose?		
	75		
		1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
		6	
Q30	What do you see yourself doing in say 10 years?		
	76		
	stable work	1	
	other job in racing/bloodstock	2	
	other job outside racing	3	
	head lad	4	
	travelling head lad	5	
	racing - abroad	6	
		7	
	D/K	8	

	Code	Nex
Q31 Is there anything which you think will make it difficult for you to carry on in stable work?		
77		
age/lose your nerve	1	
marriage and family	2	
wages	3	
	4	
	5	
Q32 You were brought-up in city/town/in the country, did you find it easy or difficult to get used to the routine of the stable at first?		
78		
easy	1	
difficult	2	
D/K	3	3
Q32b Can you think of any reason why that should be so especially?		
79		
'work' problems	1	
'authority' problems	2	
other problems	3	
D/K	4	
80		
used to the work	1	
used to authority relations	2	
other	3	
no choice, had to get used to it	4	
D/K	5	
Q33 What would you say was the most important quality of a 'good' stable lad?		
81		
good rider	1	
a lot of care and attention to	2	
horses	3	
	4	
	5	

Section p. Attitudes to Job, Pay, Security

		Code	Next Q
Q. 34	Do you think your stable is about good a place as there is to work?		
	82		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	DK	3	35
	83		
Q. 34b	Why is that especially?		
	good wages, presents, conditions	1	
	friendly atmosphere	2	
	good guv'nor	3	
	" mates	4	
	" horses	5	
	" head lad	6	
	other	7	
	DK 84	8	
	poor wages, ...	1	
	unfriendly atmosphere	2	
	poor guv'nor	3	
	" mates	4	
	" horses	5	
	" head lad	6	
	other	7	
	DK	8	
Q. 35	How would you know how other stables compare?		
	85		
	personal experience	1	
	friends in other yards	2	
	'grape vine'	3	
	talk at the races	4	
	thro' newspapers	5	
	common knowledge	6	
Q. 36	By the way, do you get a daily newspaper regularly? 86		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	37
Q. 36b	Which one(s) do you take?		
	87		
	Sporting Life	1	
	" Chronicle	2	
	Sun	3	
	Mirror	4	
	Other 'Popular'	5	
	'Quality'	6	
	Other	7	

		Code	Next
Q. 37	Have you ever thought of leaving your present job? 88		
	YES	1	37
	NO	2	38
Q. 37b	Are you seriously doing anything about it at the moment? 89		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
Q. 37c	What would your main reason be for leaving? 90		
	'money'	1	
	conditions	2	
	conflict with trainer	3	
	" " other lads	4	
	just fancy a change	5	
	other	6	
Q. 37d	As you have thought of leaving what is it that keeps you in your present job? 91		
	Lack of opportunities elsewhere	1	
	impending pool pay out	2	
	'my horses'	3	
Q. 38	If the circumstances arose, how far would you be willing to travel everyday for another job in racing? 92		
	up to 5 miles	1	
	5 but less than 10	2	
	10 " " " 20	3	
	20 + Over	4	
Q. 38b	Likewise how far would you be prepared to move for another job in racing? 93		
	up to 5 miles	1	
	5 but less than 10	2	
	10 " " " 20	3	
	20 " " " 50	4	
	50 " " " 100	5	
	100 + over	6	
	Anywhere, depending on the job	7	
	not at all	8	

	Code	Next Q
Q. 39 How much more than your present wage would you accept for another job outside of racing?		
94		
Less than £5	1	
Between £6 + £10	2	
" £11 + £20	3	
" £21 + £30	4	
" £31 + £50	5	
Over 50	6	
No amount	7	
Q. 40 If you left, how easy or difficult would it be do you think, for your trainer to find someone else to do your job?		
95		
With great difficulty	1	
with some difficulty	2	
fairly easily	3	
very easily	4	
'easy but not someone as good'	5	
DK	6	
Q. 40b Looking at it from another point of view how safe do you think your own job is?		
96		
dead safe	1	
fairly safe	2	
rather insecure	3	
very insecure	4	
DK	5	
Q. 40c Why is that then?		
97		
successful yard	1	
good employer	2	
emp't protection	3	
own skill and value	4	
other	5	
DK	6	
98		
yard not very successful	1	
arbitrary employer	2	
recent trouble with employer	3	
other	4	
DK.	5	

	Code	Next
Q. 40d Do you think that in general 'lads' have to worry about getting the sack or being made redundant? 99		
YES	1	
NO	2	
DK	3	
100		
Q. 40e Why?		
as long as you do your job youre OK	1	
T.U. influence	2	
ref. to emp't protection	3	
always racing going on	4	
other	5	
DK	6	
101		
racing's money problems	1	
arbitrary employer	2	
other	3	
DK	4	

We've been talking about job security, pay, conditions in general terms and I wonder now if you would mind giving me a few more details about earnings?

Q. 41 Could you tell me what your basic pay is before tax and other deductions but without presents, pool money and other extras?

Per week 102	Code	Next
Less than £20	1	
£20 but less than £30	2	
30 " " " 35	3	
35 " " " 40	4	
40 " " " 45	5	
45 " " " 50	6	
50 " " " 55	7	
55 " " " 60	8	
60 and over	9	
Refused to state	10	

	Code	Next Q

Q. 41b If you add on all the extras how much would your weekly pay be about on average before tax?

	103
Less than £20	1
20 but less than 30	2
30 " " " 35	3
35 " " " 40	4
40 " " " 45	5
45 " " " 50	6
50 " " " 55	7
55 " " " 60	8
60 " " " 65	9
65 and over	10
Refused to state	11

Q. 41c So what would you say is your average take home pay after deductions (not including for lodgings - probe)

	104
Less than £20	1
20 but less than 30	2
30 " " " 35	3
35 " " " 40	4
40 " " " 45	5
45 " " " 50	6
50 " " " 55	7
Over 55	8
Refused to state	9

Q. 42 How do you think your wages compare with say industrial workers in the country as a whole?

	105
Better	1
about the same	2
worse	3
Terrible/Much worse	4
DK	5

Q. 43 Do you think your present wage is realistice for a single lad who has served his time?

	106
YES	1
NO	2

	Code	Next
Q. 43b At the moment what do you think would be a realistic living wage for say a lad with a wife and a couple of kids?		
107		
Less than £40	1	
40 but less than 50	2	
50 " " " 60	3	
60 " " " 70	4	
70 and over	5	
DK	6	
Q. 44 Do you think there is ever a chance of you achieving this in your sort of work?		
108		
YES	1	
NO	2	
DK	3	
NA	4	
Q. 44b Why do you think that is the case?		
(only for 'no' answers to Q 44)		
109		
racing's money problems	1	
trainer resistance	2	
owner "	3	
too many lads who haven't served their time	4	
lads will never stick together to improve their position	5	
other	6	
DK	7	
Q. 45 How would you say that wages and conditions compare now with when you first came into the industry?		
110		
Remained the same	1	
got better	2	
Much better	3	
worse	4	
DK	5	

		Code	Next Q
Q. 45b	Could you put your finger on a major reason for this?	111	
	ref. to 75 strike	1	
	ref. to union	2	
	ref. to NJCSS	3	
	ref. to prize money	4	
	Levy Board	5	
		6	
Q. 46	How would you say your stable compares with others for earning extra through pool money?	112	
	Very good	1	
	quite good	2	
	about average	3	
	worse	4	
	Much worse/hopeless etc.	5	
Q. 47	Would you mind telling me how much you received in your last pool pay out whether in your last or present yard?	113	
	Under £20	1	
	£20 but less than £30	2	
	30 " " " 50	3	
	50 " " " 100	4	
	100 " " " 150	5	
	150 " " " 200	6	
	200 and over	7	
		114	
	Present yard	1	
	Last yard	2	
Q. 48	Could you tell me how the deductions are organised in your stable?	115	
	Equally shared pool	1	
	Share pool+% to winning lads	2	
	pool shared on basis of seniority	3	
	winning lads keep all	4	
	No system	5	
	DK	6	50

		Code	Next
Q. 48b	What do you think about this sytem?		
	116		
	good system	1	
	alright/about right	2	
	bad system	3	
Q. 49	Could you tell me whether you would prefer		
	117		
	a the present system of wages and pool money or b	1	
or			
	b a higher basic wage with no pool money or	2	
or			
	c an alternative to both?	3	

Section E Occupational Sociability and Work Absence

		Code	Next
Q. 50	How well would you say you knew most of the lads in the yard?		
	118		
	very well	1	
	quite well	2	
	hardly at all	3	
		4	
Q. 51	How many people in the yard would you call close friends?		
	119		
	Majority	1	
	about half	2	
	about a quarter	3	
	less than a quarter	4	
	None	5	

	Code	Next
Q. 52 From your experience, at which time during the day would you say the lads were at their most friendly or good humoured? 120		
at exercise	1	
M.O.	2	
grooming and dressing	3	
breakfast time	4	
after work	5	
no special time	6	
most of the time	7	
	8	
Q. 53 Could I ask you about when you're away from work - at weekends say- do you find yourself thinking about your horses occasionally, or are you able to forget about them until Monday? 121		
YES	1	
NO	2	
Sometimes	3	
DK	4	
Q. 54 Could you tell me how you feel about staying away from work. Here are a couple of views on absence, which comes closest to the way you feel about it? 122 (Use Cards - or read, give responsent the choice)		
a) 'A person should not stay away from work in any circumstances, except when it is really necessary as in the case of genuine illness'	1	
b) 'Its a free country and people have the right to take a day off once in a while if they want to'.	2	
neither	3	
Q. 54b Would you apply this to every body connected say, with your stable?		
YES 123	1	
NO	2	

Section F. Trade Unionism Racing Politics

		Code	Next
Q. 55	In recent years lots of different organisations and associations seem to have sprung up - why do you think this is? 124		
	all trying to make money	1	
	ref. to racings money problems	2	
	aftermath of 75 dispute	3	
	protecting their interests	4	
	not interested in this sort of thing	5	
	DK	6	
Q. 56	What about stable lads, do you think they have enough of a say or not? 125		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	DK	3	
Q. 57	A recent government report which looked at racing and betting said that stable workers should be represented on the new body which they said should run racing. What do you think about this proposal?		
	Very good idea 126	1	
	not a good idea	2	
	depends on who would choose them	3	
	would make no difference	4	
	DK	5	
Q. 58	In 1975 a Stable Lads Association was formed, do you know anything about how it was set up?		
	ref to J. Hill etc 127	1	
	ref to 75 strike	2	
	ref to Lambourne trainers	3	
	ref to " lads	5	
	DK	6	
Q. 59	(If no previous job Have you ever belonged to a union in any previous job?		
	128		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	

			Code	Next Q
Q. 60	Do you belong to the SLA or T&G?	129		
		T&G	1	60b
		SLA	2	60b
		Neither	3	65
			4	
Q. 60b	When did you join?			
		130		
	Within past year		1	
	Between 1 & 2 years ago		2	
	" 2 & 5 years "		3	
	" 5 & 10 years "		4	
	Over 10 years		5	
Q. 60c	Why did you join?			
		131		
			1	
			2	
			3	
			4	
			5	
Q. 60d	How often would you say you go to union/association meetings?			
		132		
	regularly		1	
	occasionally		2	
	rarely		3	
	never		4	
Q. 60e	When did you last go to one?			
		133		
	Within 6 months		1	
	Between 1 & 2 years ago		2	
	" 2 & 3 " "		3	
	" 3 & 5 " "		4	
	Over 5 years ago		5	

		Code	Next
Q. 60f	When did you last speak to an official about some union matter (ie district, branch shop steward?)		
	134		
	Within 6 months	1	
	Between 1 & 2 years ago	2	
	" 2 & 3 " "	3	
	" 3 & 5 years ago	4	
	Over 5 years ago	5	
Q. 60g	Have you ever held a post of some description in the union/association?		
	135		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
Q. 60h	Have you ever considered being a shop steward or union representation of example?		
	136		
	YES	1	
	No	2	
Q. 61	Do you think you would ever go on strike if your association/union called are?		
	137		
	YES	1	
	No	2	
	DK	3	
Q. 61b	What about some other form of industrial actions, would you consider that?		
	138		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	DK	3	
Q. 61c	Why is that exactly?		
	139		
		1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
Q. 62	By the way, are any of the other lads in the yard in the association/union		
	140		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	DK	3	

			Code	Next Q.
Q. 63	Is this an issue which is discussed often among t' lads in the yard?	141		
		YES	1	
		NO	2	
		DK	3	
Q. 64	Do you think things have improved for stable workers in the last few years as a result of the activities of the SLA/T&G?			
		142		
		YES	1	68
		NO	2	
		DK	3	
	FOR NON MEMBERS			
Q. 65	Were you ever a T&G/SLA member?	143		
		YES	1	65b
		NO	2	66
Q. 65b	Why did you leave?			
		144		
	ref to 75 strike		1	
	pressure from trainer		2	
	got nothing out of it		3	
	no special reason		4	
			5	
Q. 66	Have you ever seriously thought of joining?	145		
		YES	1	
		NO	2	
Q. 66b	Do you have serius objections to joining?			
		146		
		YES	1	66c
		NO	2	66d
		DK	3	
Q. 66c	Why is this?			
		147		
	Ideological reasons		1	67
	instrumental reasons		2	
	Both		3	
	Other		4	
Q. 66d	Is it just that you have never bothered to join them?			
		148		
		YES	1	
		NO	2	
		DK	3	
Q. 67	By the way are there any union/association members in the yard?			
		149		
		YES	1	
		NO	2	
		DK	3	

Code | Next

Q. 67b If the yard were organised would you join?

150

YES 1
NO 2
DK 3

Q. 68 Many trainers and others say that horses and unions/associations don't mix. Would you agree or disagree with this?

151

Agree 1
Disagree 2
DK 3

Q. 68b Why do you say that?

152

Agree
- 'Horses not machines' 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- DK 5

153

Disagree
- Lads need a TU 1
- Trainers have their associations 2
- 3
- 4
- DK 5

SECTION G TRAINERS

		Code	Next
Q. 69	How would you say your trainer regarded trade unions in racing?		
	favourably	154 1	
	indifferently	2	
	pragmatic view	3	
	anti union	4	
Q. 70	How well would you say you knew him?		
	very well	155 1	
	quite well	2	
	hardly at all	3	
	not at all	4	
Q. 71	How do you get on with him?		
	very well	156 1	
	quite well	2	
	alright	3	
	not very well	4	
Q. 72	Why especially is this do you think?		
	'straight with you'	157 1	
	respects your 'know how'	2	
	known him a long time	3	
		4	
		5	
Q. 73	How often do you see him to speak to in your work in a week, for example is it-		
	more than once a day	158 1	
	at least once a day	2	
	at least every other day	3	
	only a couple of days a week	4	

		Code	Next
Q. 74	Would you ever ask for advice about personal matters?		
	159		
	yes	1	7
	no	2	7
Q. 74b	Why wouldn't you do that?		
	160		
	it's personal, nothing to do with him	1	
	prefer to sort it out myself	2	
	have friends and parents to ask	3	
		4	
		5	
Q. 75	Its often said that these days workers are treated more as cogs in a machine rather than individual human beings. Would you say that was true in your stable or not?		
	161		
	yes	1	
	no	2	
	DK	3	
Q. 75b	And what about in racing generally?		
	162		
	yes	1	
	no	2	
	DK	3	
Q. 76	Training racehorses is often described as an art, would you argue with that?		
	163		
	yes	1	
	no	2	
	DK	3	
Q. 76b	What's the most important skill needed, do you think?	164	
	thorough knowledge of horses	1	
	placing the horses	2	
	management	3	

		code	next
Q. 76c	Are trainers 'born' then or are they made? 165		
	B	1	
	M	2	
	too simple	3	
	question of money	4	
	DK	5	
Q. 77	Given the financial backing do you think you could make a go of training? 166		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	DK	3	78
Q. 77b	What makes you think that? 167		
	have the experience	1	
	served my time	2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
Q. 78	Well if we leave the factor of say 'good' horses what would you say was the most important other factor helping to make a successful stable? 168		
	co-operation between trainer and lads	1	
	lads who know their jobs	2	
	teamwork among the lads	3	
	knowledgeable trainer	4	
	good wages and conditions	5	
Q. 79	People describe trainers in different ways, for example as 169		
	'gentlemen trainers'	1	
or	'business trainers'	2	
or	'gambling trainers'	3	
or	'the old school of trainers'	4	
		5	
		6	
	- how would you describe your trainer?		
Q. 80	Would you say he was - 170		
	a real disciplinarian?	1	
or	strict but fair?	2	
or	easy going?	3	
Q. 80b	Is this the sort of trainer you prefer to work for?		
	Yes 171	1	
	No	2	
	Don't really care	3	

Code | Next

Section H Relations with Owners 'presents.'

Q. 81 Apart from at the race course, how often on average, would you expect to see the owners of any of the horses, in your care?

172

At least once per month	1
" " " 2 "	2
" " " 3 "	3
" " " 6 "	4
" " " 12 "	5
Varies alot but quite often	6
" " " not "	7

Q. 82 When you see them what do they talk about to you?

173

horses	1
just pleasantries	2
ask about personal circumstances	3
they don't talk to me	4
DK	5

Q. 83 When was the last time an owner directly gave you a present?

174

Less than 1 month ago	1
Between 1 - 2 months ago	2
Between 2 - 3 " "	3
" 3 - 6 " "	4
1 - 12 " "	5
Over 12 months ago	6

Q. 83b Do you mind telling me how much it was worth?

175

Less than £10	1
£10 but less than £20	2
£20 " " " £50	3
£50 " " " £100	4
£100 and over	5

		Code	Next Q
Q. 83c	Would you say that in your experience presents are becoming:-		
	176		
	More frequent	1	
	Less "	2	
	staying much the same	3	
	DK	4	
Q. 84	Many people believe that lads are able to make up their earnings through betting with inside information. In your experience do you think that this is realistic?		
	177		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
	DK	3	

Section I. Attitudes on racing generally

Q. 85 I'd like to hear your views on some general questions concerning racing as a whole. I'll mention some statements that various people have made I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree or have no view but don't hesitate to say more if you want to.

Q. 85	1. 'Most employers in the industry have the welfare of workers at heart'		
	178		
	A.	1	
	D.	2	
	DK	3	
	2. 'Stable workers should have a greater say, in the running of the industry as a whole		
	179		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	
	3. 'Training is not an economic business in this country.'		
	180		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	
	4. 'The bookmakers take too much out of racing and don't put enough back in'		
	181		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	

		Code	Next
5 'More ordinary people should be encouraged through syndicates to own horses in training'	182		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	
6 'Stable workers need a strong trade union to fight for their interests.	183		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	
7 'Racing policy is best left to the Jockey Club without lads or trainers bothering about it'	184		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	
8 'Workers in the industry should follow the lead of their employers affairs not trade unionists.'	185		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	
9 'Lads should always be loyal to their stable even if it means putting themselves out a bit'	186		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	
10 'Trainers know what is best for the stable and lads should do just what they are told'	187		
	A	1	
	D	2	
	DK	3	

	Code	Next Q

Section J. 'Community' and 'Domestic' Situation

Now I'd like to ask a few questions about life here in Newmarket.

Q. 86 How long have you lived here altogether? 188

Less than 6 months	1
6 months but less than 12 months	2
12 " " " " 2 years	3
2 years " " " 5 years	4
5 years " " " 10 years	5
10 years and over	6

Q. 87 Supposing you had to move away from Newmarket, how would you feel about it? 189

Very sorry	1
quite "	2
indifferent	3
quite pleased	4
very "	5
DK	6

Q. 87b How easy or difficult would you say it is to find out what is going on generally in racing here in .....? 190

Very easy	1
easy	2
difficult	3
very difficult	4
DK	5

Q. 87c - and what about the social life? 191

very easy	1
easy	2
difficult	3
very difficult	4
DK	5

	Code	Next
Q. 88 How many relatives do you have in Newmarket? (exclude spouses) - could you put a rough figure on it?		
192	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
Between 6 + 12	7	
Over 12	8	
None	9	
Q. 88b How many of these would you say are or were involved in racing in some way?		
193	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
Between 6 + 12	7	
Over 12	8	
None	9	
Q. 89 What about friends and acquaintances how many of these you would say you had?		
194		
None	1	
one or two	2	
a few	3	
many	4	
very many	5	

		Code	Next Q
Q. 90	and again how many of these would be in racing? - (rough estimate)		
	195		
	All	1	
	Most	2	
	About half	3	
	only a few	4	
	none	5	
Q. 91	Excluding people from your own yard how often would you expect to see someone you know around?		
	196		
	more than once a day	1	
	at least once a day	2	
	2/3 times a week	3	
	at least once a week	4	
Q. 92	Do you regularly go to any sports/social clubs or particular pubs? 197		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	
Q. 93	What sort of thing do you mostly like to do in your free time outside of working hours?		
	198		
	boxing training	1	
	other sport	2	
	watching racing on T.V.	3	
	drink	4	
	bet	5	
	other	6	
Q. 94	On the card are a few statements about leisure time, which if any comes closest to the way you feel about your free time? 199		
	1. 'I am so involved in my work that it is often hard to say where work ends and leisure begins'	1	
	2. 'Leisure and family are more important to me than work. I try and forget all about it in my free time'	2	
	3. 'A man can only enjoy his leisure time if he gets something other than money out of his work'	3	
	4. 'I put up with work largely because of the money and need any leisure to recover from work'	4	

	Code	Next
Q. 95 A stable lad was quoted in the Sunday Express recently as saying that the lads were racing 'invisible men.' would you say this was:-		
200		
generally true	1	95
" untrue	2	96
DK	3	96
Q. 95b What do you think about this?		
201		
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
Q. 96 What sort of view do you think people here in Newmarket have of stable lads?		
202		
Unfavourable	1	
indifferent	2	
favourable	3	
DK	4	
Q. 96b And what about elsewhere in the country at large?		
203		
Unfavourable	1	
indifferent	2	
favourable	3	
DK	4	
Q. 97 What would you say was the most important thing which puts people into different social classes?		
204		
wealth/income	1	
education	2	
family of origin	3	
occupation	4	
other	5	
DK	6	
Q. 97b Would you apply that to people here in Newmarket?		
205		
YES	1	
NO	2	
DK	3	

		Code	Next Q
Q. 97c	Which of these statements comes closest to your view? 206		
	1. 'class is a thing of the past we are all equal now in Britain'	1	
	2. 'There are classes in Britain but they are not important and people can move easily from one to another'	2	
	3. 'There are two main classes in Britain - those who work and those who get others to work for them.'	3	
	Other	4	
	DK	5	
	Finally I'd like to ask a couple of questions about your domestic situation		
Q. 98	Are you single/married? 207		
	Married	1	
	Single	2	
	Divorced/Widow etc.	3	
Q. 98b	IF MARRIED		
	Does your wife/husband work? 208		
	YES	1	98c
	NO	2	98
Q. 98c	What sort of work does she/he do? 209		
	Racing/Bloodstock	1	
	Other	2	
Q. 98d	Do you have any children? 210		
		1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
	4 +	5	
	0	6	99
Q. 98e	Are any of them working? 211		
	YES	1	
	NO	2	98g
	Temp Unemployed	3	

			Code	Next
Q. 98f	What kind of work do they do?	212		
		Racing/Bloodstock	1	
		Other	2	
Q. 98g	IF NOT WORKING			
	Would you recommend a job in racing for them?	213		
		YES	1	
		NO	2	
		DK	3	
Q. 98h	Why?	214		
		If Yes	1 2 3 4	
		215		
		If No	1 2 3 4	
Q. 99	Could you tell me what sort of accommodation you have at the moment?			
		216		
		Trainers hostel	1	
		other hostel	2	
		lodgings	3	
		tied house	4	
		council accommodation	5	
		own house/flat	6	
		living with parents	7	
		rented flat/bedsit	8	

Statement of thanks and ask for any comments or questions